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EDUCATIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL COMPLEX  
ON THE EDUCATIONAL DISCIPLINE

**ISSUES OF MODERN ART CRITICISM**

The syllabus of the academic discipline for the specialty  
of the II stage of higher education 1-21 80 14 Art History

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. EXPLANATORY NOTE .....                 | 4  |
| 2. THEORETICAL CHAPTER.....               | 7  |
| 2.1 Lecture notes .....                   | 7  |
| 3. PRACTICAL CHAPTER.....                 | 37 |
| 3.1 Topics of practical lessons.....      | 37 |
| 4. KNOWLEDGE CONTROL CHAPTER .....        | 40 |
| 4.1 Questions for the exam .....          | 40 |
| 5. AUXILIARY CHAPTER.....                 | 42 |
| 5.1 Curriculum .....                      | 42 |
| 5.2 Main literature sources .....         | 52 |
| 5.3 Complementary literature sources..... | 53 |
| 5.4 Additional materials.....             | 54 |

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУКИ

## 1. EXPLANATORY NOTE

The convergence of literature with theater, painting, and music is one of the leading trends in art of the XX – XXI centuries. Thanks to her, we are witnesses to the deepening content of art, which, in turn, requires special attention from critics. In fact, one cannot understand the work of a significant artist without referring to the social, historical, literary sources that nourish the creator. Probably, this explains the fact that the idea of the need to evaluate the phenomena of art not only on the basis of its own, specific artistic laws, but also take into account the characteristics of other types of art that influenced the creative personality of the master, is increasingly evident in art history.

Art history includes art theory, art history, and art criticism. Art criticism performs research, journalistic and educational functions. The artistic and creative process consists of a number of links: reality - artist - work - recipient (reader, viewer, and listener) - reality. Art criticism acts as the organizer of this process and affects its entire links and the nature of the interaction between them. In addition, this process reflects the most important aspects of the activity of criticism, its functions and properties.

The main goal of art criticism is the assessment, interpretation and analysis of works of art, the phenomena of modern art life, trends, types and genres of contemporary art. The critic is engaged in the detection and evaluation of implicit, most often hidden meanings. The ability of a critic to treat a work of art as a subject presupposes, first of all, empathy, empathy, while the object of an aesthetic relationship - the substantial form of the work - involves only contemplation and experience. In a critical article, the will of the author acts as the plot engine openly and its plot structure allows for a certain author's position, all based on the author's interpretations of the meaning of the events taking place in the work itself. The art of criticism consists in finding, in the artistic value of the work, points of contact with their inner world and being able to convey to others the "humanized universality" of the manifested being.

The study of the discipline "Problems of modern art criticism" seems relevant due to the fact that this course is designed to give a holistic view of the features of the analysis of artistic processes and critical judgment.

The discipline "Issues of modern art criticism" is included in the basic part of the professional cycle and is addressed to undergraduates studying in their specialty 1- 21 80 14 Art Criticism. Discipline is studied in the 2nd semester and is one of the key links in the structural-logical scheme of in Master student's studies.

The process of studying the discipline "Issues of Modern Art Criticism" is interdisciplinary in nature and is aimed at assisting in the preparation of their final qualification work. In the study of previous disciplines such as "Media

Technologies in Art and Modern Art Practices”, “Topical Issues of Contemporary Art and Art Criticism”, Master student undergraduate acquires the following “input” knowledge necessary for successful mastering of discipline “Problems of modern art criticism”:

- cultural and historical features of different countries;
- artifacts of world art;
- the main style and art directions in art;
- terms and concepts provided by the framework of the studied discipline.

In accordance with the educational standard of higher education ESHE 1-2180 14-2019 in the specialty 1- 21 80 14 Art Criticism in the process of studying the discipline “Issues of Modern Art Criticism” the undergraduate develops the following competencies.

*Special Competencie:*

SC-1. Be able to develop and design scientific texts on the problems of Comparative Art History;

SC-2. Be able to analyze contemporary art, identify the problem field of Art History and solve its current issues;

SC-6. Be capable of independent author's work, editorial preparation of scientific publications, work in scientific and editorial teams.

*The aim* of the academic disciplines is to give undergraduates a comprehensive idea of art criticism, the process of its functioning in a modern cultural context.

*The tasks* of the academic discipline are:

- to form an idea of art criticism as a field of journalism;
- acquaint with the genre diversity and stylistic features of the language of art criticism;
- consider media criticism as part of contemporary art criticism;
- identify the main problems of contemporary art criticism.

At the end of the given academic discipline course a Master student is *to know*:

- features and purpose of contemporary art criticism;
- stages of creating a journalistic work;
- genres of critical publications;
- the methodological basis of contemporary art and media criticism;
- significant representatives of the stages of the historical development of artistic critical thought.
- the most important stylistic components of critical texts.

A Master student is *to be able to*:

- operate with the conceptual apparatus of discipline;
- apply rational-cognitive and artistic methods in journalism;

- develop their own criteria for evaluating a work of art;
- implement the concept of media education;
- use the information resources of art criticism.

A Master student is to be *able to use*:

- the ability to independently judge a work of art;
- the skill of writing journalistic works;
- the ability to successfully apply the acquired knowledge in practice through appropriate competencies.

Teaching discipline is carried out in the form of lectures and practical classes. When teaching the course, communicative technologies are used that allow students to independently solve educational problems. The leading form of training is practical training, during which the necessary skills are formed and consolidated. Classes are accompanied by audiovisual demonstrations.

The curriculum for the study of the discipline “Problems of modern art criticism” all is provided for 108 hours, of which 42 hours are classroom lessons. The approximate distribution of classroom hours: lecture – 28, practical classes – 16 hours, seminars – 20 hours. Recommended Master student's knowledge control form – exam.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БУРЯТИ

## 2. THEORETICAL CHAPTER

### 2.1 Lecture notes

#### Introduction

Art criticism, the analysis and evaluation of works of art. More subtly, art criticism is often tied to theory; it is interpretive, involving the effort to understand a particular work of art from a theoretical perspective and to establish its significance in the history of art.

Many cultures have strong traditions of art evaluation. For example, African cultures have evaluative traditions – often verbal – of esteeming a work of art for its beauty, order, and form or for its utilitarian qualities and the role it plays in communal and spiritual activities. Islamic cultures have long traditions of historiographical writing about art. Works such as Mustafa Ali’s *Manāqib-i hunarvarān* (1587; “Wonderful Deeds of the Artists”) often focus on the decorative traditions, such as calligraphy, woodwork, glassware, metalwork, and textiles, that define Islamic art. China also has a strong tradition of art evaluation, dating back to writers such as Xie He (active mid-6th century), who offered the “Six Principles” for great art—a major principle being the *qi yun sheng dong* (“spirit resonance, life-motion”)—and to *literati*, who wrote biographies of great artists. For these and other regional approaches to art evaluation and historiography, see art, African; arts, Central Asian; arts, East Asian; arts, Islamic; arts, Native American; art and architecture, Oceanic; arts, South Asian; and arts, Southeast Asian.

Like all these examples, the Western tradition has a set of evaluative criteria—sometimes shared with other cultures, sometimes unique—as well as elements of historiography. Within the history of Western art writing, however, is a distinct critical tradition characterized by the use of theory; theoretical analyses of art in the West—made either to oppose or to defend contemporary approaches to art making—led to what is generally understood as the discipline of “art criticism.” Art criticism developed parallel to Western aesthetic theory, beginning with antecedents in ancient Greece and fully taking form in the 18th and 19th centuries. This article explores this trajectory, also charting the divergent trend, beginning in the 20th and continuing into the 21st century, of the use of social and linguistic, rather than aesthetic, theoretical models by some critics. For the history of this tradition, see painting, Western, and sculpture, Western. See also Sidebar: Art Appreciation.

Critical approaches vary and depend upon the kind of art engaged - it makes a certain critical difference whether critics deal with painting, sculpture, photography, video, or other media. This article does not single out critics in terms

of their engagement with a particular medium but rather presents the essentials of what appear to be coherent critical positions, often influential beyond the period of their formation. Architecture presents a unique set of issues that require a unique critical approach; for architectural criticism, see architecture.

## **Section 1.**

### **Theme 1.1 Criticism as a sphere of journalism**

Journalism as a system of methods of influencing public opinion and the formation of ideas about the quality and norms in the field of media. Publicism as a form of social communication. The essence of professional-critical judgment.

The purpose of journalistic creativity. The role of artistic taste in the professional judgment of art. The validity of various readings. Manifestations of the subjective and the boundaries of subjectivity. The dialectic of the objective and subjective in critical judgment. Artistic value and artistic appreciation. The concept of value criterion in the theory of artistic value and artistic evaluation.

The use of rational-cognitive (empirical, theoretical methods) and artistic methods in journalism. Stages of creating a journalistic work (concept-collection of facts-concept-text-publication). Criteria for evaluating a work of art. The main stages of the historical development of artistic critical thought.

One of the distinguishing features of modern culture is that it lays the foundations for the formation of a new communicative paradigm. This fact is largely predetermined by the increasingly expanding system of mass communications. One of the well-known authors of the theory of the information society F. Webster noted: "Now on the agenda are the Internet, the information "superhighway" and cyber society, issues generated by information and communication technologies; e-democracy, cyborgs and online communities are becoming prime topics of discussion. New technologies have influenced not only the amount of information, but largely predetermined the multivariance of approaches in understanding the quality of life, identifying social parameters. The present time is defined by philosophers and cultural scientists in different ways: the era of globalization, the information age, post-industrial society, "timeless time", "the period of information capitalism" (Castells 2000, 70), "the time of post-postmodernism" (Mozheiko 2006, 11). The unifying dominant in these definitions can be the concept of "media culture".

Media culture represents a special type of culture of the information age and is an intermediary between society and the state, society and government. It can be defined as a set of information and communication tools, material and intellectual values developed by humanity in the process of cultural and historical development, contributing to the formation of social consciousness and



socialization of the individual. Media culture presupposes not only a culture of organizing and transmitting information through various forms of media, but also a culture of its perception, especially during the period of the “information explosion”, the main characteristics of which, according to Kirillova, are “randomness, infinity and redundancy” (Kirillova 2005, 5 ).

Criticism can and should be one of the factors opposing negative trends in the mass media system. Despite the many existing definitions, criticism is most often defined as "the ability to assess, test" (Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary 1989, 285). However, criticism is more of a cognitive-orienting activity that forms an evaluative attitude of people to various cultural phenomena or to their individual aspects. As the well-known literary critic N. Shelgunov wrote at one time, “the power of the author's critical thought lies not in what he analyzes himself, but in what he makes you think” (cited from: Baranov, Bocharov, Surovtsev 1982, 195). The ability of criticism to influence the renewal and improvement of culture, the development of society as a whole is ensured by its ability to bring critical analysis, judgments and assessments for public consideration, to stimulate a multilateral exchange of opinions, during which the narrow framework of individual knowledge is overcome. A productive selection of knowledge, information, and cultural experience in general is impossible without critical comparison. Criticism, as a special kind of creative activity in journalism, is most of all called upon to realize both cognitive and educational and correctional and normative functions. The criticism in the media can be very diverse. Literary criticism has always occupied an essential part of the "critical field" in journalism.

Its emergence, the formation of certain professional qualities is directly related to the formation and development of the press. “Criticism, as a special profession, was historically created by the press, and not so much by a special scientific one ... but by a general one, designed for the interest of a more or less general public” (Baranov, Bocharov, Surovtsev 1982, 18). In general, literary and artistic criticism, which presupposes reflection, reasoning about what is related to that part of spiritual culture that is called “artistic”, was presented before, when there was no press as such. Aristotle expressed his remarks about art and the higher science accompanying art and other creative experience - "the knowledge of principles or wisdom" in his "Metaphysics". During antiquity, Renaissance, the Middle Ages, later time, up to the 18th century, criticism did not stand out as something special, it existed latently among philologists, art connoisseurs, philosophers, partly among artists (suffice it to recall the scene of a critical dispute in Aristophanes' comedy "The Frogs") and in the public, in those layers that had the opportunity to devote time to talking about art and written analyzes of works of art. For example, the name of one of the first critics of the plastic arts, M. Psellus, has been known since Byzantium. His statements, collected in the collection

"Ecphrasis", testify to the search for the principles of consistency in the analysis of architectural, sculptural forms, painting. Literary disputes and analyzes, undertaken in scholarly essays, poetic letters-messages from M. Lomonosov, V. Trediakovsky, A. Sumarokov, had significant cultural, artistic and aesthetic significance, but did not represent a mobile, "moving aesthetics". Lomonosov's famous "Discourse on the Responsibilities of Journalists in Presenting Their Essays, Designed to Maintain the Freedom of Philosophy" testifies most of all to recommendations for future critics, to attention to that part of journalism that would later come into journalistic use as "cultural". The "Discourse ..." talks about creative freedom, journalistic ethics, responsibility for the spoken word, and intellectual and artistic training. In a word, about those necessary qualities and conditions under which criticism and criticism can take place.

The change in the nature of critical activity in connection with the emergence and strengthening of the mass press, and, consequently, the transformation of criticism from a narrow circle of people and for closed audiences of patrons and scholars of experts into a special journalistic profession was aptly noticed by the famous French critic Ch. Saint-Beuve. He wrote that there are two kinds of criticism: one - "reasonable, restrained, narrower in its topic", which "clarifies" the past, "classifying and arranging names and facts in a certain order"; "In the concept of criticism of a different kind, quite aptly expressed by the word "journalism", I put the idea of a more versatile, flexible, mobile art that developed ... from the letters of pundits, where it felt somewhat constrained, quickly migrated to the pages newspapers, constantly increasing the number of the latter, and thanks to the printing that gave birth to it, has become one of the most effective tools of our time" (Sainte-Beuve 1970, 167-168). In fact, the author puts an equal sign between literary and artistic criticism and journalism, noting its specific features on newspaper pages. With such features, criticism also appeared on the pages of Russian magazines published at the end of the 18th century. N. Novikov, N. Karamzin.

At the time of the formation of "big journalism" at the very beginning of the twentieth century. the editorial office attracted not only reporters, but also writers and professional critics. In order for the newspaper to have a completely respectable appearance, it was important to write competently not only about economics or politics, but also about art. For example, it is known from the history of the English press that "the priority in the eyes of the publisher was the involvement of competent journalists specializing in parliamentary activities. And what is no less important - in literature and theatrical life. A well-known literary critic was invited to lead the corresponding department, who helped the editorial board to attract the most talented young critics to cooperation" (Beglov 2002, 35). The same approaches were used by the creators of the mass press - D. Pulitzer, R.

Hirst, G. Harmsworth. The owners of major world publications adhere to the same rules today. For example, such indisputable leaders of quality press as Washington Press (USA), The Times, Guardian (Great Britain), Le Monde (France), Svenska Dagbladet (Sweden) are deservedly called cultural publications. The pages of these multi-page newspapers always have a permanent place and headings for art publications. One of the advantages of these publications is the quality of just such publications.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУКИ

## Theme 1.2 Critics Who Changed the Way We Look at Art

For over 1,000 years, humans have attempted to define what makes an artwork “good.” Deciding factors, such as a work’s realism, beauty, decoration, and moral idealism, have gone in and out of fashion. Fresh generations of art critics have significantly spurred these shifts in taste, forever altering the public’s perception of aesthetic styles.

The following 16 critics have helped translate and unpack now-seminal artists’ occasionally confounding visions, and cemented our conception of the canon. This list, admittedly, comprises predominantly European and American white men. For centuries, they’ve dictated what artwork has been seen and appreciated. Slowly but surely, the demographic is shifting. Diverse critical voices don’t just offer new perspectives on art: They change how we look at the world, beyond the frame.

In his book *Natural History*, Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder addresses zoology, astrology, botany, and all subjects he deemed worthy of their own history, including several chapters dedicated to craftsmen, artists, and architecture.

Pliny traces the origin of painting, suggesting that it began when man tried to trace his own shadow. Scholars have theorized that Pliny’s writings (in particular, his reverence for antiquity) influenced Giorgio Vasari, who wrote his famous history of art over 1,000 years later.

Xie He (6th century)

Hundreds of years ago, art was an explicit competition. In the 6th century, Chinese artist Xie He developed his “Six Principles” in order to rank painters according to merit. Even then, however, the standards were subjective. For example, “spirit resonance” refers to a certain ineffable vitality.

Other measures are more technical or formal: “bone method,” or structural brush use; composition; and, in the case of artists who made copies of existing works, adherence to originals. Xie He’s principles have proven so enduring that they are still used to evaluate traditional Chinese painting today.

Often considered the first art historian, Giorgio Vasari also established influential preferences and prejudices. His canonical 1550 text, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, created a (highly biased and exaggerated) roster of the day’s most important creative figures. They were all Italian, and skewed Tuscan, in particular (Michelangelo, Giotto, Sandro Botticelli). Vasari himself coined the term the “Renaissance,” mythologizing the so-called rebirth of culture in Europe from the 13th to 16th centuries.

Jonathan Richardson the Elder (1667–1745)

In 1715, British painter and collector Jonathan Richardson the Elder penned what’s widely accepted as the first work of art theory written in English. Richardson

begins his “Essay on the Theory of Painting” by finding fault with what he claims is a widely held belief: “Many, I believe, consider the art of painting but as a pleasing superfluity; at best, that it holds but a low rank with respect to its usefulness to mankind.”

Painting, Richardson counters, is important because it allows us to communicate ideas, elevates us beyond brutishness, and allows for individual style or expression. Richardson is also credited as the first writer to use the term “art criticism.” In his 1719 “Essay on the Whole Art of Criticism,” Richardson attempts to lay a groundwork for how to judge an artist or a painting, as well as how to ascertain the authenticity of an artwork.

Etienne La Font de Saint-Yenne (1688–1771)

One of the earliest documented art critics in France, Etienne La Font de Saint-Yenne visited and reported on the salons at the Louvre in the mid-18th century.

The salon works were then subject to critical analysis, beginning with the highest genre of history painting.

This structural approach established the pattern for art criticism for more than a century to come.

However, La Font offers more than just the basis for writing reviews. In his Enlightenment of France, La Font tried to integrate his revolutionary views into his writings (some scholars suggest that he criticized the king in the years leading up to the French Revolution) and blamed the “decline” of art for the “growing influence” of women on society.

Denis Diderot (1713–1784)

In 1747, at the height of the Enlightenment, Denis Diderot began editing the widely influential French encyclopedia, which encompassed philosophy, criticism and science. He published the works of such major thinkers as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Jacques Necker and Voltaire.

Diderot himself contributed many articles on literature as well as on art. His “Sketch of Painting” (written in 1765, published in 1796) influenced both the poet Charles Baudelaire (the most famous art critic) and the scholar Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768)

German art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann encouraged the resurgent interest in classical art during the Enlightenment. In his 1765 essay “Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks,” he asserts: “The only way for us to become great, or even inimitable if possible, is to imitate the Greeks.”

Working at the Vatican (as a librarian, then president of antiquities, and finally secretary to a cardinal), Winckelmann had access to the Catholic Church’s vast collection of ancient treasures, and developed a system to distinguish different periods in early Western art history that is still used today.

Notably, Winckelmann never visited Greece: His life was cut short when an acquaintance murdered him in Italy under mysterious circumstances. Call it art criticism's greatest unsolved mystery.

John Ruskin (1819–1900)

A devotee of J.M.W. Turner's landscapes, John Ruskin concerned himself with what "truth" meant in painting. He published five volumes of his *Modern Painters* (1843–60), which celebrated and popularized Romantic art. Ruskin helped to cement Turner's legacy and translate his ideas into persuasive critique—his writings encouraged the English to accept the painter's later, more abstract work. Yet Ruskin's moral view of art eventually lost out to the philosophy of British-based aesthetes such as James Abbott McNeill Whistler, who favored "art for art's sake." Truth, according to them, was of no consequence to aesthetic production.

- Who knows who Turner is? -Famous English landscape painter

Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918)

Best known as a stylistically innovative poet, Guillaume Apollinaire is also responsible for popularizing modernist art. In particular, he supported the Cubist endeavors of his friends Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, and Georges Braque well before the public accepted their new, fractured painting style.

Apollinaire identified "the juxtaposition of reality and imagination, and the simultaneity of spatial and temporal movement." Apollinaire wrote prefaces to salon catalogues, as well as a text, *The Cubist Painters*, which lyrically affirmed the artists' place in history.

Walter Benjamin (1892–1940)

In his famous 1935 essay, "A Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin says that art is in a broader socio-economic context. He notes that while people were engaged in art, they also copied it - printed, traced in the style of a master, or reused the same sculptural forms.

However, in the modern era, photography and film could capture the world better than any traditional art form. Then why are paintings and sculptures still standing? Benjamin suggests that what truly makes an original work of art special is intangible.

"Even in the most perfect reproduction of a work of art," he writes, "one element is missing: its presence in time and space, its unique existence in the place where it takes place."

Harold Rosenberg (1906–1978) and Clement Greenberg (1909–1994)

A critic for the erudite quarterly *Partisan Review* and then *The New Yorker*, Harold Rosenberg may be most famous for developing the term "action painting." Along with Clement Greenberg, he avidly promoted Abstract Expressionism, which required fluid, personal gestures (or actions) to apply paint to canvas. He

was a particular fan of Willem de Kooning, while Greenberg preferred Jackson Pollock.

Greenberg, for his part, wrote for *The Nation* and *Artforum*, and offered a doctrinaire approach to art. In his writings, abstraction is the endgame, and art's political or social context is unimportant. Greenberg hadn't created Pollock's reputation, but he was its curator and he was terrific at it.

Linda Nochlin (1931–2017)

Linda Nochlin's influential 1971 essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" posited a simple reason for the title question.

The canon is full of male artists not because they're better, but because institutional structures have prevented women from advancing in the field. Nochlin was a prolific author, and throughout her career, she wrote monographic essays on female artists like Louise Bourgeois, Mary Cassatt, and Sophie Calle, among many others.

Lucy Lippard (1937–)

From the start of her career, Lucy Lippard was critical of the division between art and earthly concerns. Unlike Greenberg and Rosenberg, her interests lay in unpacking the larger social context in which artworks were produced. In 1977, she co-founded the feminist art journal *Heresies*. For Lippard, art and activism could be linked. The collective of women artists who contributed to the journal—a group that included Joan Snyder, Miriam Schapiro, and Pat Steir—frequently addressed female representation in its pages.

Rosalind Krauss (1940–)

The prominent editor and scientist Rosalind Krauss became famous in the art world in 1974 when she published an article in the journal *Art in America*, in which she committed herself to be an authoritative critic of Clement Greenberg for mistreating the estate of sculptor David Smith. Krauss made a name for herself as a supporter of a burgeoning minimalist scene. In 1976, she became a co-founder of *October*, an influential, theory-rich magazine that presented the American posters with solid post-structuralist ideas from French thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault.

Jerry Saltz (1951–)

Jerry Saltz, who received the Pulitzer Prize for Criticism in 2018, is at odds with the most significant academic critic. He writes for the *New York* magazine in an accessible, pleasant tone about topics ranging from compulsory viewing exhibitions to artistic contempt for *Salvator Mundi* (a picture of Leonardo da Vinci, which for a long time was considered lost - a rather ordinary work for the High Renaissance, not opening new artistic horizons).

## Section 2.

### Theme 2.1 Genres of Art Criticism

Genre - one of the key concepts in any field of artistic creation, musical or literary, visual or theatrical.

In all the arts, a genre first of all contains a criterion of a certain content embodied in a certain form.

But not only that is important for art criticism.

Art criticism, being in its language a special branch of literature, or rather, literary and artistic criticism, relies on genres as types of works of this type of creativity.

However, their origin and historically established genre system are naturally specific. They are due to the special role of artistic-critical thinking and journalistic activities in culture.

The creativity of art critic from the point of view of the genre is secondary, since it is brought to life by some other phenomenon in the field of art.

And in the formation of the genres of criticism, along with two traditional (to determine the genre) questions about the content and form of artwork, the art critic faces two other questions - "why?" And "for whom?" to write. They reflect the most important specifics of critical activity.

We are talking about the reflection in the genre of critical texts of the purpose of the speech and the addressee to whom this speech is directed. Outside of these, the critical text will be deprived of its social significance.

- We will dwell on this in more detail in the next section of our topic.

#### 3.1. The purpose and address of the critical speech

The general purpose of critical speech can cover different aspects of the creative and artistic-organizational process. Such can be either extraordinary, outstanding events, a new artistic phenomenon, work, personality, or their long absence; both a culturally significant event and a negative one, which may be followed by public upheaval, indignation.

However, the purpose of critical speech is not always global.

The process of functioning of art in society consists of many particulars of different levels, which at different times acquire critical significance for the critic and require reflection.

Thus, the goals pursued by a critical speech can be qualitatively different.



We can identify four main groups of goals based on the increasing degree of complexity.

1. The informational goal of critical speech. Informing society about all aspects of the artistic process is the main goal of artistic journalism and criticism.

Also, information goals involve attracting the attention of the audience to a particular fact or phenomenon without expressing an estimated attitude.

Nevertheless, even simple “dry” information is in some way a potential appraisal act, since it resists the worst punishment for the art sector - silence and oblivion.

- Do you agree?

because there is nothing worse than the situation when you wrote a book or staged a play about which is nowhere and nobody says.

2. Propaganda or popularization goals of critical speech.

Behind the propaganda and popularizing goals is already hiding special information - with a clearly positive position of the author.

The main emphasis during popularization and propaganda falls on the enlarged, openly interested presentation of the phenomenon (compositions, performances, staging, personality, events, etc.).

3. Educational or educational goals.

Such goals of critical speech suggest an active evaluative impact on public opinion. Here, the focus of criticism is primarily on the reading (or listening) audience itself and the influence that it seeks to exert on it.

4. Analytical goals - this is the most difficult of professional tasks of criticism.

Analytics involves in-depth coverage of the issue, aimed at reasoned evaluative conclusions, which means that it requires the critic not only to know the topic about which he writes, but to own it professionally. So, a music critic must be a musician, a theater critic an actor, etc. The complexity of professional tasks here is how to build a logical path and figuratively, vividly, convincingly bring the reader (listener, viewer) to the desired conclusions.

The purpose of a critical speech may, for its part, dictate the choice of a publication genre for the same reason: a detailed review or feuilleton, an analytical article, or just an information note.

In addition, it is precisely in the purpose of the critical speech that the initial position of the critical activity of the author is manifested. Ideally, a love of art, a struggle for the development and increase of the cultural component in the spiritual life of society.

Although the purpose of the speech, unfortunately, even in art criticism is sometimes different (political, commercial), very far from artistic tasks.

- Now we need to answer the question "for whom" critical texts are written.

The communicative side of creativity is important for all artistic fields. To one degree or another, masters of all arts need their listener, reader, viewer.

However, for art criticism, contact is the main condition for activity, since art criticism, firstly, is public, as are public, for example, concert performance, theater, cinema, and secondly, it is brought to life by a socio-aesthetic necessity, and not the need for self-expression or knowledge.

That is, art criticism is always actively "aimed at the reader."

1. An educational setting is important for determining the reader of critical texts.

From this position, the addressee of art criticism can be represented in the form of four conditional groups: professionals, enlightened art amateurs, just amateurs and an ignorant audience.

1.1 Professionals are those who, firstly, research, study the artistic culture, that is, professionally deal with many of its problems. These are composers, musicologists, teachers, scientists.

Secondly, professional artists, practitioners: soloists and orchestra students, conductors and artists of musical theaters, directors and choreographers, as well as organizers of cultural life - managers, leaders of concert and theater organizations, etc.

Orientation to a professional reader implies the opportunity to delve into the actual details. Such, for example, may be a review published or pronounced with a view to a special audience.

1.2 Enlightened art amateurs can be considered people of other professions who have some kind of art education and upbringing.

1.3 Simply, amateurs do not usually have an artistic education, although at the same time, they are able to live an active and eventful cultural life, often even more profound and subtle than many professionals, since in their fate art, not being a means of subsistence, remains only pure spiritual affection.

1.4 Finally, an ignorant reader is only a potential consumer of cultural property. How it is possible to attract the attention of such an addressee, what should be the approaches in communicating with him is a special issue that a specialist must solve every time.

- Returning to the question and the purpose and addressee of the critical speech, it must also be said that ...

Along with the educational, other parameters of determining the audience of the critic are important today.

For example, age. If musical practice offers society programs, events designed for different age groups of listeners, then criticism reflecting must understand who it is addressing.

Another parameter is social stratification. The public picture of consumers of artistic values is actively changing, which means that the requirements for special artistic information are also changing. Expensive or "publicly accessible" concerts, performances, music shows, as well as different halls, gather different audiences, which, as the addressee of possible musical and journalistic performances, are also significantly different from each other.

In certain situations, a national or religious dimension may also be apparent. And we are talking not only about ethnic art traditions that may be in the field of view of the critic, but also about the evaluative approaches themselves, which in different national or religious conditions will be perceived differently by the respective reader (viewer, listener).

Thus, speaking about the purpose and addressee of the critical speech, we can draw the following conclusions

The goals pursued by a critical speech can be qualitatively different. They are:

informational, propaganda, educational, analytical.

An educational setting is important for determining the reader of critical texts.

From this position, the addressees of art criticism can be: professionals, enlightened art amateurs, just amateurs and an ignorant audience.

In addition, there are other parameters for determining the addressee: age, social stratification, a national or religious dimension.

### 3.2. Critical Objects

In his activity, the critic is constantly confronted with the question - "what to write about?" - and this concerns the content of the critical speech directly. Here we will talk about the concept of the object of critical reflection.

There are four groups of objects of critical reflection, which are qualitatively different from each other and cover different aspects of the functioning of the artistic culture.

1. The first group of objects that an art critic can write about is - artistic creation - includes all artistic production. Creativity in the form of specific manifestations of art (music, theatrical productions, paintings, films) constantly

calls for its understanding and appreciation. Creativity is the main object of critical expression.

The next creative object in this group is performance (musical, choreographic, plastic).

The third creative object in this classification is stage production. It covers all spectacular art forms.

First of all, this is a musical performance - opera, ballet, operetta, musical and any mixed musical and theatrical genres.

It is also a musical drama or musical film.

Finally, this is a representation of any level of complexity and genre mood, realized in any space: on the theater stage, in a natural interior in the open air - squares and streets, parks and historical places, on the screen - television, film or any other projection (for example on the walls of houses in musical laser shows).

2. The next group of objects of art criticism are participants in the creative process.

In simple words, these are artists, writers, directors, actors, choreographers, composers and musicians-performers of all specialties and directions. Also - these are teachers, educators of any level, among whom there were and will be outstanding people. These are scientists enriching the world with new knowledge about art. Of course, first of all, the artists themselves are of interest in various fields of creativity.

3. The third group of objects of art criticism is related to the sphere of organization of the art process, since the very process of functioning of art in society also needs to be understood and evaluated. Here we should talk about

- art structures,
- art events,
- art education,
- art production.

Now more about each group...

- Artistic structures are public institutions through which art realizes itself in the surrounding life.

These include, firstly, concert halls and any other concert venues and organizations.

Secondly, theaters and individual troupes, opera, ballet, dance, functioning on a different basis.

The structures include numerous cultural management organizations dealing with the problems of art and creativity, creative unions, publishers, and so on.

The activities of art structures are intertwined with artistic, economic, financial, commercial and legal aspects, outside of which a modern art process is impossible.

- Art events should include everything that happens in the cultural life of a country or in the world. Here, as an object of attention, one can imagine a separate concert or a musical and theatrical performance, and a number of artistic events as an integrity of a higher order: a competition, a festival, a tour of an art collective (orchestra, theater troupe), etc.

- About art education - it's understandable - how successfully art education has been organized in the country (music, theater and more), the vitality of this art form depends in many respects.

- Finally, artistic production — music printing — can also become an object of artistic criticism; audio and video industry; production of musical instruments, costumes, sets, etc.

Art production plays an important role in the functioning of art, because without it the normal process could be disrupted. And this means that here a professional musical and journalistic view is necessary.

We talked about three groups of critical speech objects. The last one left ...

4. The group of objects of art criticism, conventionally designated as a reflection of the artistic process, occupies a more modest, as if accompanying place. The coverage of what is happening in this area is more likely to be professional.

The subject of criticism may be:

- the state of the special periodical press about art,
- the level of her competence,
- quantitative and qualitative "indicators",

And tax issues can be addressed to informational music radio and television programs, to the Internet.

For this, it is possible for critics to participate in press conferences and public discussions on the problems of art, and may become the object of their subsequent public coverage.

Thus, we got 4 groups of critical speech objects. An object is what the critic writes about his articles.

### 3.3 The form of critical speech

The form of critical speech in the broad sense of the word is presented as a complex of professional tools used in this type of creativity.

Modern criticism realizes itself in two fundamentally different forms - written and oral.

In particular, as we recall, the modern language of written critical thought is intensively enriched with elements of colloquial speech.

However, oral speech itself is just as rapidly evolving. In oral speech, special means of sound speech are also significant - tempo, intonation-timbre shades, semantic accents, and finally, artistry.

A very significant indicator of a critical speech is its volume. It is expressed in signs, lines, pages, printed sheets for a written assignment, or in timing - for oral. The volume, as a rule, is determined by the media authorities on the basis of multiple tasks: the nature of the object, the addressee of the body, the purpose of coverage of a particular phenomenon.

Volume dictates to the author not only the level of permissible details and deepening, but, to a certain extent, the choice of a particular genre. The opportunity to devote one or a half or fifteen pages to a selected event or phenomenon, to do a minute report, a ten-minute plot or a whole show - all this, of course, determines the author's approach to the material being created.

## **Theme 2.2 Language of critical publication**

The language of a critical publication directly depends on the content and form of the critical statement.

Let's list the most common forms of critical messages and the requirements for their writing.

We can say that the Purpose, addressee, object, form in their interaction are the signs due to which a critical speech is able to take on a certain genre appearance.

Genres are defined by various objects and purposes of critical reflection, that is, by what and for what purpose is highlighted in the proposed presentation.

- So, we define the following genres of art criticism:

### **4.1 Content Forms**

#### **1. Information. Announcement. Annotation**

These genres themselves have already laid the goal of critical speech.

As you know, information is "a message informing about the state of affairs, the state of something."

From the standpoint of objects of art criticism, information is directed to a cultural event that is about to happen or has already happened. From the position of semantic components as a formal attribute, this is a description of the object.

- What is information in terms of the genre of criticism?

1. The information genre is very common in the media, it covers everything that is aimed at the artistic process. Informative materials are also invaluable for historians of subsequent generations.

Information does not require a valuation approach, nevertheless, the fact of submitting some information is a potential evaluative act.

Information helps to navigate in a variety of events, to develop priorities for oneself, makes it possible to cover the art process. For an art critic, the ability to timely identify and publish interesting information is an indispensable professional quality.

2. Announcement - special information that precedes an art event and, at the same time, advertises, promotes it.

It always focuses on the best, most advantageous aspects of the presented phenomenon.

The purpose of the announcement is not just to draw attention to the expected fact, but to interest, even intrigue, and, in the end, to lure the listener-reader-spectator, facilitating his participation in the expected event.

"Hurry up to see!" - an old as a world call from the announcement of an artistic spectacle.

3. Annotation is also interested information, but special information, since the object is no longer an event, but a work of art. Annotation carries a popularizing and even educational burden.

In the dictionaries, the concept of annotation is interpreted as "a summary of the content."

The main purpose of the annotation is not retelling or appreciation of a work of art, but preparation for perception.

That is why the reader is often so annoyed by the filling of annotations with unwanted detailed evaluative judgments that impose their own interpretation on them.

Annotation precedes contact with a work of art, and does not replace it.

An abstract should be of interest, it is intended to provide the necessary guidelines to facilitate the path to contact with a work of art.

Public release of annotations - concert and theater programs, booklets, opening remarks. As part of the annotation may be included in the announcement.

4. The next form is a chronicle.

The word "chronicle" comes from the Greek "chronos" - which means - time.

Most often, the concept of a chronicle includes a description of a cultural or historical event in history or a short message about a fact.

Chronicle are usually purely informational character.

5. Reporting - the French word (reportage), derived from the English report - means "report."

Reporter is the classic profession of a newspaper journalist delivering up-to-date information about events, facts, of which he manages to be a witness or participant.

Reporting - material reflecting the information received from the position of the reporter himself. This is appropriately colored, individual, that is, the author's coverage.

From the point of view of art criticism, the subject of the report is an artistic event.

However, the reporting genre is not very common in art criticism. It implies a certain extraordinary nature of events that need immediate coverage, and therefore, the speed of the media itself (such as a daily newspaper or a daily author's informational radio or television channel). And such areas are usually given not to culture, but to politics or the public.

In the artistic life, reporting is especially valuable during festivals, competitions and other major cultural events. They are often specially prepared and distributed by the press center of an art event.

Nowadays, the most appropriate form of reporting has been oral radio and television journalism - right from the concert halls. It is popular in world practice.

6. Review - the main form of art criticism. Moreover, the very concept of art critic is often associated precisely with the activities of the reviewer.

The review genre presupposes a text of a necessarily evaluative character, whose attention is directed to a work of art.

The presence of the review component is also possible in other genres - a creative portrait, a problematic performance aimed at musical creativity itself, a



review, if it covers creative events, etc. The history of critical art is primarily the history of reviewing.

### 7. Creative portrait

The genre of creative portrait occupies a large place in art criticism. Here, the object of attention is not only creativity, but also the unique personality of the artist.

A creative portrait is a characteristic of the artistic activity of a writer, actor, painter, and musician.

The main purpose of writing a creative portrait is to determine the artist's creative personality, create its image.

There are three components of a creative portrait of an artist:

1. brief biographical information,
2. artworks created by him,
3. its real reality (the context of the era and society).

Depending on the tasks, criticism may dominate one of these components.

Thus, a creative portrait is an attempt to express an impression, to give a summary description of an artist's personality through his work, considered in the context of time.

### 8. Overview

The review is defined as "a concise message on a number of phenomena that are united by a common theme".

For example, the object of the review is a chain of musical events, united by a certain time or place and forming some kind of semantic unity: festival, competition, tour of the art collective, etc.

A review especially needs the ability to systematize and synthesize a large amount of information.

That is why the review may combine different goals - analytical, educational and informational.

This means that the critic's attention will be focused on both the creative and organizational, social and socio-cultural aspects of the event.

### 9. Problem speech

Along with the review and creative portrait, problematic speech can be considered the most important genre of art criticism.

A problematic performance is a description of any side of the artistic process (creative, organizational), with the identification of causal relationships and regularities in the functioning of art.

The problems themselves can also be different - artistic-aesthetic, sociocultural, moral, ideological.

It is the problematic speeches designed to focus the attention of contemporaries on pressing issues of the development of culture and art.

Thus, the main goal of a problematic speech is to focus on pressing issues in the development of contemporary artistic culture.

The super task facing the author must be clearly read and understood by the reader. It can be presented in four versions:

1. Lead to the statement of the problem.
2. To pose a problem.
3. Lead to solve the problem.
4. Offer a solution to the problem.

A problematic presentation implies certain conclusions for the sake of which the whole exposition is unfolding. They can be clearly and openly presented in the text, but can be presented in a more veiled way or served in some unexpected form, which for its part should attract special attention to them.

Being the most complex genre of artistic criticism, problematic performance can use the means of journalistic skill, as well as a wide scientific base, philosophical equipment, and literary writing. The main thing is professional knowledge of the issues raised.

There are also a number of formal genres of criticism.

1. The note

Pay attention - this is the simplest genre, which is a "short message in print."

First of all, it is a written text of a small volume.

The genre of the note does not pose any special literary, stylistic and compositional tasks to the author. And from the point of view of the content, the note is most often informational, but it can be chronicle and review, depending on the purpose of the publication.

2. Etude.

"Study" is the name of some works (scientific, critical, etc.), small in volume, devoted to a particular issue.

However, unlike a note, an etude is not just a small text. An etude is characterized by a free composition, and its literary style requires an individualized approach.

3. Essay - from French *essai* is translated as "experience", "sketch". This text, by its genre characteristics, is similar to an etude. However, their community is not concluded in small volumes (the essay does not impose such restrictions),

but in a free, individualized literary manner that reflects the personality of the author of the essay.

The main feature of the essay is the original look expressed in its original form. This is also highlighted by the encyclopedic interpretation of the genre: “an essay is a genre of philosophical, literary-critical, artistic-journalistic literature that combines the author’s emphasized individual position with a laid-back, often paradoxical presentation, focused on colloquial speech.”

From the point of view of the content in the essay, different ideas can be realized: the object can be an artwork, performance, creative person, event or problem, which leads to deeply personal thoughts.

#### 4. Feature article

The feature article occupies an important place in art criticism and journalism. As in the essay, the feature article plays a significant role in the literary, stylistic and compositional side.

As in the essay, the feature article plays a significant role in the literary, stylistic and compositional side. Equally important is the author’s position and personality of the writer, especially at the level of interpretation of the proposed objects.

Here, with all the seriousness of the chosen topic, a certain understatement, freedom of fantasy, and the subjective position of the author are possible.

The subject of the feature article genre can be any significant objects of artistic culture and life: creativity, personality, events and problems of the current art process.

In the feature article, the appearance of the person in question, the color of the era and the artistic and philosophical interpretation can be freely intertwined.

The feature article text may also contain many important theoretical and historical details.

#### 5. Article

The most informative form of criticism is the article. As you know, the article is important and widespread in the field of research.

Even when comparing the genres of the essay and the article, it can be seen that the essay is closer to fiction, the article to scientific.

The article has its own clear signs.

Among them:

1. conceptuality, and hence a large proportion of logical, and not impulsive-emotional traits;
2. The construction of this concept in causal relationships;
3. systematic and clear structure;
4. the presence of the analytical part;

5. the presence of conclusions.

From the position of content in the genre of the article, a review, a creative portrait, and a review can be performed. But, undoubtedly, it is the most common form of problematic critical speech.

6. Feuilleton. Pamphlet

The name of both genres comes from the French feuilleton and the English pamphlet. They are united by a number of common features: topicality, polemic, satirical orientation.

Moreover, the main purpose of the pamphlet is denunciation, exposing.

Feuilleton, however, is a purely newspaper and journal genre of an emphasized critical nature.

A modern understanding of feuilleton involves the expression of a critical attitude through satire, ridicule, sarcasm.

4.3 Oral criticism forms

The increasing importance of oral culture in the life of modern society, as well as the leadership of television among the media open up new opportunities for oral criticism, for the development of its new genres and forms.

The systematization of the genres of oral criticism is quite general, but now we can talk about a number of their existing types.

1. An interview, or conversation, is a form that is widely used by radio and especially television journalism.

This is also the most spectacular genre, since the text appears before the listener in its original sound (rather than written) form. The viewer-listener has the opportunity to observe the thought process, monitor the progress of the conversation, the reaction of the participants.

It is even more valuable when the interview is conducted in an interactive form, with telephones for feedback and the viewer can ask a question, that is, join the conversation and turn it in the direction of interest to him.

The genre of television interviews is even more focused on the portrait task of "showing" a creative person in close-up....

But this does not always happen. Now we will see and discuss such an example.

1. Watch the video and try to convey its essence.

2. Does everyone understand what the video is about? Or look again?

2. Keynote speech

Opening remarks from the stage or before a concert, performance, broadcast on radio or television.

In terms of meaning, this is most often a variant of annotation (i.e., artistic information without a focused assessment).

3. Radio and television reviews are an important component of continuous information broadcasting.

Such programs following the traces of past events have the opportunity to acquaint the listener-viewer with them in fragments or in full.

Unlike reporting, review is always evaluative. Here the educational, propaganda, evaluative and analytical tasks of criticism can be realized.

4. Participation in the "round table", discussion, debate.

This can be, for example, traditionally occurring discussions in the press clubs of art competitions, festivals. Speaking at discussions, disputes, as a rule, is focused on problemativeness, on polemics, on the clash of different positions.

Such a discussion can become widespread in the electronic media system, for example, in the genre of television talk shows.

#### Conclusion

Thus, as you have noticed, the genre structure of art criticism is complex and multidimensional. It is formed under the influence of many factors, offers a wide range of genre varieties.

These factors are the purpose, addressee, objects and the chosen form of critical speech.

Knowledge of the features and expressive capabilities of various critical genres is an important condition for professionalism. Only a creative approach to each genre decision, its conscious choice, depending on the subject of the conversation, the super-task and the reading or listening audience, makes it possible to go to the goal - contact with those for whom the art critic works.

### **Theme 2.3 Information resources of contemporary art criticism**

The development of modern criticism in the context of active informatization as a socio-cultural sphere. Modern culture is characterized by the development of global worldwide networks for the storage and exchange of information available to any organization and every member of society; artificial intelligence systems; the emergence of a global information society. Intensive informatization processes are accompanied by the emergence of new and improvement of existing information technologies. The introduction of information

technology in many spheres of human life has led to the fact that information has become a full-fledged commercial resource, and therefore a source of profit. In this regard, there is an active development of the information economy, a new information infrastructure of industry and the socio-cultural sphere, the formation of information culture at the global and individual level.

Information society is a society, the majority of whose members are involved in the production, storage, processing of information at its highest level in the form of knowledge. A characteristic feature of the information society and the transformation of the production sphere is associated with the creation of the most information-intensive product with a significant share of innovation, design and marketing in its value. Information becomes readily available and is provided at the request of interested people and organizations in a form convenient for them, the cost of its use is available to a wide segment of the population.

Information is a fundamental scientific concept:

A) a set of information that is the object of collection, storage, processing and transfer;

B) any information and / or data that can be stored on tangible media or reflected in electronic form. It is formed from data and messages that are useful in some way.

The concept of information assumes the presence of two objects: a source of information and a consumer (information for a consumer must make sense so that he can evaluate it for his own purposes). The typical information carrier is the message. Knowledge is the top level of information.

Information support for art critic is a system for collecting and processing data that allows studying the situation on the art market in statics and dynamics, measuring the influence of its determining factors and identifying opportunities for managing it in accordance with the chosen strategic direction.

Information for an art critic must meet the following requirements:

- o necessity and sufficiency in volume;
- o timeliness of receipt and transfer;
- o reliability;
- o completeness;
- o comparability.

There are two ways to get sources of information for an art critic:

The first method assumes that information can be either primary or secondary.

Primary information is data obtained as a result of specially conducted field research in order to solve a specific problem. Its advantages lie in the fact that the collection of information is carried out in accordance with a precisely set goal;

collection methodology is known and controlled; results are available to the firm and shielded from competitors; the reliability of the data is known. The disadvantages are the high cost and time consuming.

Secondary information is that information that exists somewhere and was collected from various sources for various purposes. Secondary data helps the researcher to get a deeper understanding of the situation in the industry, trends in sales and profits, the activities of competitors, the achievements of science and technology. This data is not specific research.

Secondary sources can be:

- Public (publicly available for any researcher).
- Private (owned by a particular company).
- Subscribed (they are a mixture of public and private sources, and the information is owned by someone).

Thus, the effectiveness of the art critic's activity largely depends on the quality of information management, namely, on the quality of collecting and obtaining accurate, timely and necessary information, its subsequent transfer to the organization's employees for further use in the process of performing professional tasks, etc.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БУКМ

### Section 3.

#### Theme 3.1 Media criticism in the system of contemporary art criticism

Currently, the information support of the organization's activities is due to the introduction of modern information technologies. Work with internal information can be carried out using internal corporate databases and communication platforms, as well as using various messengers, e-mail and other tools. The provision of information about the activities of an organization and its products to potential and existing consumers and competitors is increasingly carried out on the Internet using websites, as well as social networks and instant messengers. This trend is explained by the active development of Internet technologies.

According to the report of the analytical agency "We are social", digital, mobile and social networks have become an integral part of the daily life of the majority of the world's population. More than 4.5 billion people currently use the Internet, and social media users have passed the 3.8 billion mark. Almost 60% of the world's population is already online, and recent trends show that by the middle of this year, more than half of the world's population will be using social media.

The role of digital technologies in our lives has reached new heights, and more and more people are spending more time on the Internet.

The use of mobile devices is increasing. Despite the ubiquity of mobile devices, three quarters of Internet users aged 16 to 64 still access the Internet through laptops and desktops. In addition, Statcounter data shows that approximately 53 percent of all web page requests currently come from mobile phones, but computers still account for 44 percent of the total.

Thus, the use of modern information Internet technologies (website, social networks, video hosting, instant messengers (Viber, Telegram, etc.), mobile applications) in the activities of art industry organizations has a number of advantages:

- high traffic;
- variety of audience types;
- relatively small financial investments;
- the possibility of forming a permanent audience;
- availability for any scale of business;
- high demand.

In this regard, the implementation of effective information support for the art critic's activities in interacting with the target audience, providing it with the necessary information about the company and its products, involves the development of a communication strategy - long-term planning of the company's



actions in order to establish the required level of communication, which is a strategic plan of social interaction with the purpose of obtaining marketing results in a communication environment.

Website as an information tool providing art critic:

There are several types of sites. Among the main ones stand out:

1. Landing Page (a one-page site with an application form, suitable for providing information about promotions, special offers or several products).
2. Multi Landing (Landing Page with automatic provision of various data depending on the request, needs, region, gender or age of the user).
3. Promo site (designed to promote goods and services, with a unique and memorable design, from 3 to 10 pages).
4. Business card site (designed to provide concise and most significant information about the company and its products with the obligatory indication of contact information, has a volume of 3-5 pages).
5. Gallery site (a portfolio or business card site with a built-in photo gallery, most often used in the field of culture and arts by artists, designers, photographers, etc.).
6. Showcase site (a business card site with a built-in catalog of goods or services, depending on the complexity of the catalog structure, can be divided into sections, contains detailed information, images, characteristics, prices, etc.).
7. Online store (showcase site with online payment option, shopping cart and customer's personal account).
8. Corporate website (company portal, which hosts news, articles, vacancies, portfolios, catalogs and price lists, various sections for clients, partners and ordinary visitors, as well as closed sections for different groups of employees (corporate forums, personal accounts, admin panels with different access rights to information, etc.).
9. Blog or Vlog (a website consisting of regularly added articles or videos, often with the ability to comment and discuss content by users).

### **Theme 3.2 Specific features of media criticism as a field of journalism**

Media criticism refers to a new, rapidly developing area of modern journalism, carrying out critical knowledge and assessment of socially significant, relevant cultural and creative, professional, ethical, legal, economic and technological aspects of information production in the media with an emphasis on the creative side of creating media content [2] ... Journalistic criticism of the media

is communication with the audience, in the process of which, on the basis of analysis, interpretation and evaluation of media texts, genre and style forms of their embodiment, an influence is exerted on the perception of media content by the public, on ideas about the material and spiritual world that are formed in the mind recipients of mass information.

In the conditions of modern information production and the market, the activities of the media are a complex fusion of creativity, commercial calculation and technological determinism, the ratio of which varies depending on the specific social, economic, legal, cultural and professional context of the functioning of the print and electronic press. Therefore, adequate critical knowledge of the product of information production - media content - is today difficult or even impossible without close consideration of the current economic, technological and legal aspects of media activities, which significantly affect the characteristics of media texts and the choice of formats for their presentation.

By studying and evaluating both the creativity of the creators of media works and the content of the media, as well as the mobile complex of the diverse relationships of the print and electronic press with the audience and society as a whole, media criticism has an orienting influence on the audience. The works of media critics help the public to develop ideas about the normativity of various aspects of the functioning of the print and electronic press, which is necessary to determine the public assessment of certain media phenomena, to develop the skills of independent rational analysis and assessment of media texts, the creative activities of their creators, various manifestations of the interaction of the media with the social environment.

Media criticism can participate in the revision, transformation, updating of the established criteria of norms, standards, which can result in a social reevaluation of the efforts and achievements of both the creators of media content and the activities of the media.

In modern conditions, when science often does not keep pace with changes in the media sphere, it is media criticism, with its focus on operational knowledge and assessment of topical issues of social functioning of the media, that provides comprehension of new phenomena and trends, separating the "grain from the chaff", helping to navigate the current contradictory development not only of the mass audience, but also of professionals of the print and electronic press.

Media criticism contributes to the improvement of the activities of the print and electronic press, identifying obsolete or socially dangerous manifestations in the activities of the media and creators of media content - and creating professional and social conditions through influencing public opinion to overcome them.

While recognizing the importance of criticism aimed at improving the journalistic component of media content and journalism as a kind of creative and professional activity, it should be borne in mind that modern media offer the audience not only media texts prepared by journalists. The concept of "mass media" cannot be equated with the concept of "journalism", since the content of the media, the core of which is journalistic works, includes a variety of non-journalistic components that often prevail in modern media content. These components also deserve close scrutiny and critical evaluation. By virtue of the above, media criticism cannot be limited - and is not limited in practice - to the analysis and assessment of only one journalistic component, with all the importance of the latter.

Media criticism interacts (up to interpenetration) with other areas of critical journalism: film criticism, literary, art, music, theater criticism.

### **Theme 3.3 Problems of modern media criticism**

The main problems of contemporary art criticism are associated with changes in its principles, methods, thematic field and genre structure. The emergence of the concepts of "art journalism" and "art criticism".

The current sociocultural context and journalistic practice highlights the tendency to consider critical creativity in the media in a different plane - media criticism.

At the turn of the 21st century, then, art criticism no longer adheres to one current, fashionable approach; unexpectedly paralleling the model set by the ancients, art criticism can now evoke elements of the formal, psychological, moral, social, and spiritual. Of course, the 21st century brings a variety of social, economic, and technological changes that the ancients could not have anticipated, which no doubt will continue to inspire new methods of criticism. It is impossible, in the new century, to privilege one mode of criticism over the other – to do so is to turn it into a prejudice in favour of a particular kind of art. At the same time, it seems necessary for someone to show the rationale for all forms of criticism and their relationship with each other and to integrate them into a grand systematic theory of critical practice. This daunting, perhaps impossible task is best left to the ideal Oscar Wilde described in "The Critic as Artist" (1891): the critic who regards his craft as the grandest art of all.

According to K. Nordenstreng, media criticism is compatible with the traditional forms of mass media regulation and the development of the self-regulation system in a more open version devoid of corporate limitations. The

presence of self-regulatory bodies (press councils, etc.) and codes of professional ethics, in turn, favors the development of effective media criticism: the latter, reveals deviations from the requirements of professionalism, makes it possible to appeal to clearly formulated "rules of the game", and to specific regulatory structures.

While literary and artistic criticism focuses mainly on the analysis and interpretation of the creator's activities, on the characteristics of his creative personality, ideological originality and imagery and style structure of the works created by him, considered in a certain socio-cultural context, media criticism must relate media production and content. Mass media not only with creative, but also with economic, legal, professional and ethical standards.

Depending on the composition of the authors - media critics, the audience purpose of critical journalistic works, taking into account the characteristics of the object of their influence, as well as the peculiarities of the content of these works, media criticism appears in three interpenetrating and interrelated forms: academic, professional ("intrashop") and mass media criticism, which together form a complex systemic trinity, which is one of the basic properties of this phenomenon of journalism.

Academic media criticism is represented by the critical journalistic works of scientists and researchers, addressed to both academia and mass media professionals. As a rule, she learns and evaluates the most complex and large-scale topical problems and processes of the functioning of artistic culture, requiring critics to have a thorough theoretical and conceptual approach, an increased level of competence, and the use of scientific methods of researching media practice. In academic media criticism, elements of journalism are inextricably linked with theoretical, conceptual elements. It acquires the most complete embodiment of the property of scientific character, since its works are created by authors who own the tools for scientific research of media phenomena.

Academic media criticism learns the most complex and large-scale phenomena and processes in the artistic field, requiring a theoretical approach, an increased level of competence. Scientists are often the authors of scientific and journalistic publications, which not only indicate the actual scientific problems of culture that require study, and directions for further research, but also ways and means of improving the current media practice.

Significant scientific and journalistic publications that critically analyze various aspects of artistic culture and their interaction with society belong to the pen of sociologists, psychologists, educators, film experts and representatives of other social and humanitarian sciences (see the works of sociologist T. Adamyants,

film expert D. Dondurei, psychologist L. Matveeva, teacher-theoretician of media education A. Fedorov, etc.).

The work of academic media critics is usually published in scientific journals and almanacs, as well as in publications aimed at the media content creator community (for example, in professional journalism publications). Selected works of academic media criticism can be found on educational Internet sites.

Professional media criticism targets communities of journalists and other creators of media content. The role of critics in this case is usually represented by representatives of these communities - or authors who are closely related to these communities by the nature of their professional activities.

Professional media criticism contributes to the self-knowledge of media communities and the development of intra-corporate self-criticism, the improvement of the skills of creative media workers and the constant revision and development of the criteria and norms of their professional activity in accordance with evolving social needs. The works of professional media criticism are most often published on the pages of professional journalism and industry publications.

The works of mass media criticism are intended both for a wide audience of readers, TV viewers, radio listeners, and for creators of media content. In this case, journalists and other creative media workers appear in two roles. On the one hand, these are colleagues to whom the critic turns to analyze their activities. On the other hand, this is part of the general audience - of course, the more informed, sophisticated and critical part of it. Mass media criticism stimulates public interest in topical issues of artistic culture, acts as a means of feedback between the audience and the authors of works of art. It educates consumers about art, forms in them a certain culture of mastering media content and evaluating not just individual texts, instant products, but provides an opportunity for a public dialogue between the audience and authors, contributes to the achievement of public consensus on controversial issues.

The most developed specialization in mass media criticism is television criticism. In recent years, sections and columns of television criticism have appeared in many newspapers. Attempts have also been made to integrate various specializations of media criticism (television criticism, criticism of periodicals, criticism of radio broadcasting) within the framework of one newspaper section.

The relationship between the three types of media criticism, ideally, should be built on the principle of communicating vessels: academic enriches the professional with theoretical knowledge and conceptual approaches, new ideas and extracted research material; in turn, both of these types of critical activity feed the mass media criticism with new knowledge and experience, push it to formulate and publicly consider the problems identified by science and professional practice.

### 3. PRACTICAL CHAPTER

#### 3.1 Topics of practical lessons

**Practical task № 1.** – on the topic 1.2 - Writing an essay on the activities of the famous critic

An essay is not clearly structured, but its outline usually includes:

Introduction. This part should set an emotional mood, bring the reader to the issue under consideration, interest him, prompting him to read the text to the end.

The main part. At this stage, the author puts forward theses, finds substantiation for them, thereby proving his own point of view.

Conclusion. Summarizing what has been said in the main part, the author draws a general conclusion.

**Practical task № 2–3.**– Creative portrait

Characteristics of the creative activity of a writer, actor, artist, musician.

You need to choose any musician, artist, choreographer and so on and write his creative portrait.

This plan must be followed:

1. reality (context of the era and society),
2. brief biography,
3. Works created by him.

The volume of this work is 1-2 pages.

**Practical task № 4–5.**– Note and annotation

The second task is to write an information note and annotation.

Here you will need events that I asked you to visit - a performance, exhibition, etc.

1. Note - a message about any cultural life event that you plan to visit (see).

This is a general characteristic (answers the questions - what? Where?

When?), Does not pretend to the depth of formulations and assessments.

And to answer the question - Why am I planning to go there?

The volume of work is no more than 1 page. You can make a presentation.

2. Annotation – a short message about the contents of the play, performance, film, book, etc. which you watched. With a little commentary giving an initial idea of the work.

The volume of work is no more than 1 page.

### **Practical task № 6–7. – Review**

The next task is to write a review of the exhibitions and performances you have already watched.

#### Theatrical performance

1. Briefly give information about the author of the play (paintings). It is possible to describe the history of the creation of these works.
2. Define the theme (problem) of the presentation.
3. Define the main idea of the presentation.
4. Briefly outline the content of the play (what is the plot about?).
5. To characterize the main characters of the play.
6. Identify the genre features of the play.
7. Describe the features (manner) of performance (acting).
8. Describe the features of the stage design of the play.
9. Express your attitude to this play.
10. Give the name of your review.

The volume of work should contain 1-2 pages.

#### Exhibition

1. Briefly give information about the author of the play (paintings). It is possible to describe the history of the creation of these works.
2. Define the theme (problem) of the presentation (exhibition).
3. Define the main idea of the presentation (exhibition).
4. Determine which style direction works belong to and give it a characterization.
5. Express your attitude to this exhibition.
6. Give the name of your review.

The volume of work should contain 1-2 pages.

### **Practical task № 8–9. – Interview**

The next task is to learn how to interview and process the information received.

It is necessary to follow the following recommendations:

1. Interview with an expert or opinion leader. Unlike reporting, where the emphasis in the text is on the description of the event, the interview is interesting due to the personality.

2. The goal is to provide unique information. That is why it is important to bring the interlocutor outside the prepared answers and formulaic phrases. Be able to ask uncomfortable questions or talk so that the interlocutor shares the most intimate.

3. Narrow feed angle. The task of a journalist or interviewer is to find a new angle of communication with a public person. For example, do an interview with a film and theater actress for a women's magazine and show her as a wife and mother.

4. Accuracy of information transfer. Quotations of the interlocutor are often included in the title of interviews, especially if they are unusual or unusual for a potential target audience.

**Practical task № 10–11. – Essay**

Write an essay-reasoning on a given topic:

Describe the main directions of contemporary art criticism and distinguish art criticism from media criticism.

Scope of work - 1.5 - 2 pages



## 4. KNOWLEDGE CONTROL CHAPTER

### Questions for the exam

1. What is the place of art criticism in the educational process?
2. What is the place of art criticism in the culture process?
3. What is the place of art criticism for the artist?
4. What qualities should a critic have?
5. What sciences does art criticism relate to and why?
6. With which art sciences does art criticism relate and why?
7. What are the fundamental features of art criticism?
8. What famous critics have changed our perception of art and how?
9. What is the merit of creativity Pliny the Elder?
10. What is the famous Chinese scientist Xie He?
11. What was famous for Giorgio Vasari?
12. What is the merit of the British artist and collector Jonathan Richardson the Elder?
13. What is the merit of the French art critic Etienne La Font de Saint-Yenne?
14. What is famous for Denis Diderot?
15. What is the merit of the German scientist Johann Joachim Winckelmann?
16. What is famous for John Ruskin?
17. What the French poet did in addition to the art work of Guillaume Apollinaire?
18. What did Walter Benjamin write in his scientific works?
19. What Harold Rosenberg is famous for?
20. What's new brought Clement Greenberg?
21. What modern art critics do you know and what is their merit?
22. What informational genres of art criticism do you know? What are their features?
23. What formal genres of art criticism do you know? What are their features?
24. What oral genres of art criticism do you know? What are their features?
25. What are the characteristics of the critical genre of creative portrait?
26. What are the characteristics of the critical genre of article?
27. What are the characteristics of the critical genre of review?
28. What is the role of information for the art critic?
29. List the requirements that information for an art critic must meet.
30. What is the source of information for an art critic?
31. In what ways can art criticism get information?
32. Describe the primary and secondary sources of information for the art critic.
33. Describe the role of digital technology in the art critic's activities. Give an example.

34. Name and describe modern information Internet technologies used by the art critic (website, social networks, video hosting, instant messengers (Viber, Telegram, etc.), Mobile applications).
35. Describe the website as an information tool that provides the art critic with the information he needs. Give examples.
36. What types of internet sites are you aware of. Give examples.
37. What are the forms of contemporary media criticism?
38. Describe academic media criticism.
39. Describe professional media criticism.
40. Describe scientific media criticism.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУКИ

## 5. AUXILIARY CHAPTER

### 5.1 Curriculum

Educational Establishment

“Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts”

APPROVED

Vice-Rector for Research of Educational  
Establishment “Belarusian State  
University of Culture and Arts”

\_\_\_\_\_  
V. R. Yazykovich

“ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 2020

REGISTRATION № УД\_\_\_ / эуч.

### ISSUES OF MODERN ART CRITICISM

*The syllabus of the academic discipline for the specialty  
of the II stage of higher education 1-21 80 14 Art History*

2020

The syllabus is completed in accordance with the educational standard of the II stage of higher education ESHE 1- 21 80 14 - 2012 “Art Criticism”, registration № Д21-2-03 / ed. of 29.08.2012.

#### **AUTHOR**

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#### **RECOMMENDED TO APPROVAL**

*The Department* of Belarusian and World Culture and Arts, educational establishment “Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts” (minutes № 14 of 17.03.2020);

*The Presidium* of the Scientific and Methodological Council of the Educational Establishment "Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts" (minutes №3 of 08.04.2020)

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

The convergence of literature with theater, painting, and music is one of the leading trends in art of the XX – XXI centuries. Thanks to her, we are witnesses to the deepening content of art, which, in turn, requires special attention from critics. In fact, one cannot understand the work of a significant artist without referring to the social, historical, literary sources that nourish the creator. Probably, this explains the fact that the idea of the need to evaluate the phenomena of art not only on the basis of its own, specific artistic laws, but also take into account the characteristics of other types of art that influenced the creative personality of the master, is increasingly evident in art history.

Art history includes art theory, art history, and art criticism. Art criticism performs research, journalistic and educational functions. The artistic and creative process consists of a number of links: reality - artist - work - recipient (reader, viewer, and listener) - reality. Art criticism acts as the organizer of this process and affects its entire links and the nature of the interaction between them. In addition, this process reflects the most important aspects of the activity of criticism, its functions and properties.

The main goal of art criticism is the assessment, interpretation and analysis of works of art, the phenomena of modern art life, trends, types and genres of contemporary art. The critic is engaged in the detection and evaluation of implicit, most often hidden meanings. The ability of a critic to treat a work of art as a subject presupposes, first of all, empathy, empathy, while the object of an aesthetic relationship - the substantial form of the work - involves only contemplation and experience. In a critical article, the will of the author acts as the plot engine openly and its plot structure allows for a certain author's position, all based on the author's interpretations of the meaning of the events taking place in the work itself. The art of criticism consists in finding, in the artistic value of the work, points of contact with their inner world and being able to convey to others the "humanized universality" of the manifested being.

The study of the discipline "Problems of modern art criticism" seems relevant due to the fact that this course is designed to give a holistic view of the features of the analysis of artistic processes and critical judgment.

The discipline "Issues of modern art criticism" is included in the basic part of the professional cycle and is addressed to undergraduates studying in their specialty 1- 21 80 14 Art Criticism. Discipline is studied in the 2nd semester and is one of the key links in the structural-logical scheme of in Master student's studies.

The process of studying the discipline “Issues of Modern Art Criticism” is interdisciplinary in nature and is aimed at assisting in the preparation of their final qualification work. In the study of previous disciplines such as “Media Technologies in Art and Modern Art Practices”, “Topical Issues of Contemporary Art and Art Criticism”, Master student undergraduate acquires the following “input” knowledge necessary for successful mastering of discipline “Problems of modern art criticism”:

- cultural and historical features of different countries;
- artifacts of world art;
- the main style and art directions in art;
- terms and concepts provided by the framework of the studied discipline.

In accordance with the educational standard of higher education ESHE 1-2180 14-2019 in the specialty 1-21 80 14 Art Criticism in the process of studying the discipline “Issues of Modern Art Criticism” the undergraduate develops the following competencies.

*Special Competencie:*

SC-1. Be able to develop and design scientific texts on the problems of Comparative Art History;

SC-2. Be able to analyze contemporary art, identify the problem field of Art History and solve its current issues;

SC-6. Be capable of independent author's work, editorial preparation of scientific publications, work in scientific and editorial teams.

*The aim* of the academic discipline is to give undergraduates a comprehensive idea of art criticism, the process of its functioning in a modern cultural context.

*The tasks* of the academic discipline are:

- to form an idea of art criticism as a field of journalism;
- acquaint with the genre diversity and stylistic features of the language of art criticism;
- consider media criticism as part of contemporary art criticism;
- identify the main problems of contemporary art criticism.

At the end of the given academic discipline course a Master student is *to know*:

- features and purpose of contemporary art criticism;
- stages of creating a journalistic work;
- genres of critical publications;
- the methodological basis of contemporary art and media criticism;
- significant representatives of the stages of the historical development of artistic critical thought.
- the most important stylistic components of critical texts.

A Master student is to be *able to*:

- operate with the conceptual apparatus of discipline;
- apply rational-cognitive and artistic methods in journalism;
- develop their own criteria for evaluating a work of art;
- implement the concept of media education;
- use the information resources of art criticism.

A Master student is to be *able to use*:

- the ability to independently judge a work of art;
- the skill of writing journalistic works;
- the ability to successfully apply the acquired knowledge in practice through appropriate competencies.

Teaching discipline is carried out in the form of lectures and practical classes. When teaching the course, communicative technologies are used that allow students to independently solve educational problems. The leading form of training is practical training, during which the necessary skills are formed and consolidated. Classes are accompanied by audiovisual demonstrations.

The curriculum for the study of the discipline “Problems of modern art criticism” all is provided for 108 hours, of which 42 hours are classroom lessons. The approximate distribution of classroom hours: lecture – 28, practical classes – 16 hours, seminars – 20 hours. Recommended Master student's knowledge control form – exam.

## **CONTENT OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL**

### **Introduction**

The place of art criticism in the educational process. The purpose and tasks of the studied discipline. Criticism as a special kind of activity. The social and cultural contexts of criticism, its journalistic essence. Two recipients of criticism: a) the author (creative team) of the analyzed work; b) the audience of the work. Mass and professional consciousness. Objectivity and market conditions. The specifics of journalistic and newspaper criticism.

Art criticism as a social phenomenon. A place of criticism in the world of artistic culture. The scientific and journalistic nature of critical activity. Foundational features of art criticism. Art criticism as a special creative activity. The connection of art criticism with research activities. Art criticism and art criticism. The connection of art criticism with philosophy and aesthetics, theory and history of art and journalism.

### **Section 1.**

#### **Theme 1.1 Criticism as a sphere of journalism**

Journalism as a system of methods of influencing public opinion and the formation of ideas about the quality and norms in the field of media. Publicism as a form of social communication. The essence of professional-critical judgment.

The purpose of journalistic creativity. The role of artistic taste in the professional judgment of art. The validity of various readings. Manifestations of the subjective and the boundaries of subjectivity. The dialectic of the objective and subjective in critical judgment. Artistic value and artistic appreciation. The concept of value criterion in the theory of artistic value and artistic evaluation.

The use of rational-cognitive (empirical, theoretical methods) and artistic methods in journalism. Stages of creating a journalistic work (concept-collection of facts-concept-text-publication). Criteria for evaluating a work of art. The main stages of the historical development of artistic critical thought.

#### **Theme 1.2 Critics Who Changed the Way We Look at Art**

For centuries, people have tried to determine what makes a work of art truly outstanding. Decisive factors, such as realism, beauty, jewelry, and the moral idealism of a work, have come in and out of fashion. New generations of art historians have significantly stimulated these changes in taste, forever changing the public's perception of aesthetic styles.

The following critics helped translate and unpack the sometimes confused visions of artists who are sometimes embarrassing, and reinforced our concept of



canon. For centuries, they have dictated which works of art have been seen and appreciated. A variety of critical voices do not just offer new perspectives on art: they change the way we look at the world beyond.

Particular attention in this context would be desirable to divide such names as Pliny the Elder (23-79), Chinese artist Xie He (6th century), Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), Jonathan Richardson the Elder (1667–1745), Etienne La Font de Saint-Yenne (1688–1771), Denis Diderot (1713–1784), Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), John Ruskin (1819–1900), Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918), Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), Harold Rosenberg (1906–1978) and Clement Greenberg (1909–1994), Linda Nochlin (1931–2017), Lucy Lippard (1937), Rosalind Krauss (1940), Jerry Saltz (1951).

## **Section 2.**

### **Theme 2.1 Genres of Art Criticism**

The genre in art criticism is a relatively stable system of means of reproduction of reality mastered by cognition. The scientific and journalistic nature of critical activity. The genre variety of art criticism is distinguished by the following features: a) by the peculiarity of the displayed object (event, field of activity); b) according to their purpose (purpose).

Three groups of genres of art criticism. Information genres: note, reportage, information report, informational interview. Genre types of notes: announcement, annotation, mini-review, mini-portrait. The main requirements for a note are efficiency and relevance, accuracy and brevity of presentation.

Analytical genres: article, review, reportage, report. Genre differentiation of articles: research article, practice-analytical article, problematic and polemical article.

Artistic genres: sketch, essay, creative portrait, essay, pamphlet, feuilleton, review, review. Varieties of essays (problematic, traveling). The structure and main information and analytical blocks of the review. Creative portrait: content, logic, composition.

### **Theme 2.2 Language of critical publication**

Means of verbal imagery used in fiction-critical texts. Vocabulary. The most important stylistic components of texts (epithet, comparison, metaphor, hyperbole). Acceptance of artistic comparison. The Importance of Irony in Critical Artistic Expression. Idiomatics as an important literary and stylistic means of increasing the tension of expression. Art criticism and poetic syntax techniques.

Emotionally expressive means of journalism. Imagination in journalistic creativity. The value of imagination at the stage of comprehension of reality.

Correlation of patterns manifested in artistic creativity with patterns of rational comprehension of reality.

Artistic image in the structure of journalism. Differentiation of the concepts of “image” and “artistic image”. Image as a way of cognitive orientation. Artistic imagery as an expression of the specifics of art.

### **Theme 2.3 Information resources of contemporary art criticism**

The development of modern criticism in the context of active informatization as a socio-cultural sphere. The concept and importance of information support in the field of contemporary art criticism. The use of Internet tools for information support of modern culture (sites, social networks, video hosting, instant messengers, video ads). Web site as a tool for information support of criticism. Purpose of sites and their structure. Types of sites (business card website, corporate website, promotional website, online store, online gallery).

## **Section 3.**

### **Theme 3.1 Media criticism in the system of contemporary art criticism**

The place and role of media criticism in the sociocultural context of the last decade of the 20th century - the beginning of the 21st century. Media criticism as a new developing field of modern journalism. Media criticism as an independent field of art criticism. The objectives of modern media criticism are related to its focus on the operational knowledge and assessment of pressing issues of the social functioning of the media, the comprehension of new phenomena and trends. The methodological basis of modern media criticism is the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of media texts and genre-style forms of their implementation.

The influence of relevant economic, technological and legal aspects of the media on the characteristics of media texts and the choice of formats for their presentation. Interaction of the press and electronic media. Different types of perception of the printed and sounding word. Description of the process of creating broadcasts on radio, television and for the Internet. Television criticism as a form of self-knowledge of TV. The predominance of television criticism in the print media over radial, as well as criticism of the media as a whole.

### **Theme 3.2 Specific features of media criticism as a field of journalism**

Attributive signs of media criticism: the professionalism of the authors; combination of information and assessment; a special subject is media activities; publicity, etc.

Two recipients of criticism: a) the author (creative team) of the analyzed works; b) the audience of media production.

The genre diversity of media criticism is associated with its close interaction (up to interpenetration) with other areas of critical activity: film criticism, literary, artistic, musical, and theater criticism. The most typical genres for this direction: review, review, correspondence, article, commentary, essay, creative portrait, feuilleton, interview, replica, etc.

The blogosphere as a potential platform for the development of media criticism.

Media criticism as an integral part of media education. The technique of critical analysis. The context of the work. The ratio of the screen world and reality. Multimedia technologies and different forms of cognition of life. TV as the creator of a new reality, mediatization of events (“the truthful lie of screen illusions”), ways to achieve it.

The concept of “language of the media”, the specific language of the screen, radio, print media, Internet resources. Features of the journalist's work in the print media, on TV, radio and in the online edition. Forms of authorization of contact with the audience.

### **Theme 3.3 Problems of modern media criticism**

The main problems of contemporary art criticism are associated with changes in its principles, methods, thematic field and genre structure. The emergence of the concepts of “art journalism” and “art criticism”.

The current sociocultural context and journalistic practice highlights the tendency to consider critical creativity in the media in a different plane - media criticism.

The current issues of media criticism are connected: a) with issues of representing culture and art in unity with the sociocultural and media context; b) with the problems of introducing media culture through globalization through art in the context of relevant multidimensional media content.

Issues of media ethics and problems of self-regulation of the journalistic community. The problem of copyright in media criticism. Style, the use of artistic expressiveness, the expressiveness of vocabulary, etc. Media criticism today for the professional and scientific community remains a phenomenon with undefined boundaries.

Researchers of the theory and practice of contemporary art criticism have ascertained the problem of the humanization of the information space, the acquisition of cultural values again.

**EDUCATIONAL METHODOICAL CHART OF THE ACADEMIC  
DISCIPLINE**

| № section theme | Name of section & theme   | Number of class lessons |                   | Managed independent work of students | Form of control |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
|                 |   | lectures                | practical classes |                                      |                 |
| 1.              | <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>2</b>                |                   |                                      |                 |
| 2.              | <b>Section 1.</b><br>Theme 1.1 Criticism as a sphere of journalism                        | <b>2</b>                |                   |                                      |                 |
| 3.              | Theme 1.2 Critics Who Changed the Way We Look at Art                                      | <b>2</b>                | 2                 | 2                                    | essay           |
| 4.              | <b>Section 2</b><br>Theme 2.1 Genres of Art Criticism                                     | <b>6</b>                | 6                 | 2                                    | practical task  |
| 5.              | Theme 2.2 Language of critical publication  | <b>2</b>                | 2                 | 2                                    | abstract        |
| 6.              | Theme 2.3 Information resources of contemporary art criticism                             | <b>2</b>                | 2                 | 2                                    | practical task  |
| 7.              | <b>Section 3</b><br>Theme 3.1 Media criticism in the system of contemporary art criticism | <b>2</b>                | 2                 |                                      |                 |
| 8.              | Theme 3.2 Specific features of media criticism as a field of journalism                   | <b>2</b>                | 2                 |                                      |                 |
| 9.              | Theme 3.3 Problems of modern media criticism  | <b>2</b>                | 4                 | 2                                    | essay           |
|                 | <b>Total</b>  | <b>22</b>               | <b>20</b>         | <b>10</b>                            |                 |

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## 5.4 Additional materials

### Principles of Media Criticism

This was written some time around 1997. For a more recent (and more detailed) treatment of the current state of the media, see [Big Media & Bad Criticism](#).

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Media criticism is in an undeveloped state, today, largely because the mainstream media allows virtually no open discussion of the subject. Some criticism that does get to the public, of course, but most of it is corrupted by the same forces that have turned the rest of the media into a source of manipulation.

The selections below attempt to correct this conspiracy of silence by offering readers an introduction to the field that will allow them to see the larger trends that define much of the media. The selections focus on the following characteristics of contemporary culture and society:

- \* The fact that all centers of power today rely on media and that all use sensory manipulations and simulations, along with story lines, rhetoric, and performances to sell audiences products, candidates and ideas.
- \* The fact that most media, today, from news to advertising, rely on spectacle, simplification and exaggeration to grab and hold audiences.
- \* The fact that the news media has become a part of the power and economic system that it is supposed to report on. Instead of standing at a distance from events and trying to provide an accurate account, all too often it is just another inside player manipulating information for its own ends. This not only means that media companies have a conflict of interest but also that journalists who would prefer to be honest end up subordinating themselves to those in power in their own organizations and shaping their coverage accordingly. It also means that media criticism that isn't afraid to report on what is taking place is now essential to the maintenance of democracy.
- \* The fact that much of media is beset by idealization and demonization in which media manipulators depict themselves and their allies as heroes and saints, and their opponents or targets as villains, fools and disturbed characters, both to create exciting stories and win battles.
- \* The fact that the media today is pervaded by missing information. What is missing is precisely the information above, which would discredit the system and result in reforms that would lock out many of those who now work the system for their own benefit.
- \* The fact that all media today is a form of action. Stories, rhetoric, sensory images and manipulated impressions are all efforts to influence people's perceptions and

action, evoke fears and desires, and play to values. The omission of information from the media is a form of action, as well.

\* Finally, the fact that the media today is also full of efforts to get at the truth, which are often disguised or limited in various ways. Many of these efforts to tell the public the truth can be found in the fictions of movies and television which openly depict the con artist culture we now live in and the corruption of the media.

These propositions have to form the core of any theory of media criticism and any theory that seeks to describe contemporary society. The following selections are intended to provide overviews that will introduce and expand on these ideas.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУКИ



# ART CRITICISM AND FORMAL ANALYSIS OUTLINE

## ART CRITICISM

### Defining Art Criticism

Art criticism is responding to, interpreting meaning, and making critical judgments about specific works of art.

Art critics help viewers perceive, interpret, and judge artworks.

Critics tend to focus more on modern and contemporary art from cultures close to their own.

Art historians tend to study works made in cultures that are more distant in time and space.

When initially introduced to art criticism, many people associate negative connotations with the word "criticism."

A professional art critic may be

a newspaper reporter assigned to the art beat,

a scholar writing for professional journals or texts, or

an artist writing about other artists.

### Journalistic criticism –

Written for the general public, includes reviews of art exhibitions in galleries and museums.

(Suggestions that journalistic criticism deals with art mainly to the extent that it is newsworthy.)

### Scholarly art criticism

Written for a more specialized art audience and appears in art journals.

Scholar-critics may be college and university professors or museum curators, often with particular knowledge about a style, period, medium, or artist.

## FORMAL ANALYSIS

**-Four levels of formal analysis, which you can use to explain a work of art:**

**1. Description = pure description of the object without value judgments,**

## **analysis, or interpretation.**

It answers the question, "What do you see?"

The various elements that constitute a description include:

- a. Form of art whether architecture, sculpture, painting or one of the minor arts
- b. Medium of work whether clay, stone, steel, paint, etc., and technique (tools used)
- c. Size and scale of work (relationship to person and/or frame and/or context)
- d. Elements or general shapes (architectural structural system) within the composition, including building of post-lintel construction or painting with several figures lined up in a row; identification of objects
- e. Description of axis whether vertical, diagonal, horizontal, etc.
- f. Description of line, including contour as soft, planar, jagged, etc.
- g. Description of how line describes shape and space (volume); distinguish between lines of objects and lines of composition, e.g., thick, thin, variable, irregular, intermittent, indistinct, etc.
- h. Relationships between shapes, e.g., large and small, overlapping, etc.
- i. Description of color and color scheme = palette
- j. Texture of surface or other comments about execution of work
- k. Context of object: original location and date

## **2. Analysis = determining what the features suggest and deciding why the artist used such features to convey specific ideas.**

It answers the question, "How did the artist do it?"

The various elements that constitute analysis include:

- a. Determination of subject matter through naming iconographic elements, e.g., historical event, allegory, mythology, etc.
- b. Selection of most distinctive features or characteristics whether line, shape, color, texture, etc.
- c. Analysis of the principles of design or composition, e.g., stable,

repetitious, rhythmic, unified, symmetrical, harmonious, geometric, varied, chaotic, horizontal or vertically oriented, etc.

d. Discussion of how elements or structural system contribute to appearance of image or function

e. Analysis of use of light and role of color, e.g., contrasty, shadowy, illogical, warm, cool, symbolic, etc.

f. Treatment of space and landscape, both real and illusionary (including use of perspective), e.g., compact, deep, shallow, naturalistic, random

g. Portrayal of movement and how it is achieved

h. Effect of particular medium(s) used

i. Your perceptions of balance, proportion and scale (relationships of each part of the composition to the whole and to each other part) and your emotional

j. Reaction to object or monument

### **3. Interpretation = establishing the broader context for this type of art.**

It answers the question, "Why did the artist create it and what does it mean

The various elements that constitute interpretation include:

a. Main idea, overall meaning of the work.

b. Interpretive Statement: Can I express what I think the artwork is about in one sentence?

c. Evidence: What evidence inside or outside the artwork supports my interpretation?

### **4. Judgment: Judging a piece of work means giving it rank in relation to other works and of course considering a very important aspect of the visual arts; its originality.**

Is it a good artwork?

Criteria: What criteria do I think are most appropriate for judging the artwork?

Evidence: What evidence inside or outside the artwork relates to each criterion?

Judgment: Based on the criteria and evidence, what is my judgment about the quality of the artwork?

## **Barrett's Principles of Interpretation**

1. Artworks have "aboutness" and demand interpretation.
2. Interpretations are persuasive arguments.
3. Some interpretations are better than others.
4. Good interpretations of art tell more about the artwork than they tell about the critic.
5. Feelings are guides to interpretations.
6. There can be different, competing, and contradictory interpretations of the same artwork.
7. Interpretations are often based on a worldview.
8. Interpretations are not so much absolutely right, but more or less reasonable, convincing, enlightening, and informative.
9. Interpretations can be judged by coherence, correspondence, and inclusiveness.
10. An artwork is not necessarily about what the artist wanted it to be about.
11. A critic ought not to be the spokesperson for the artist.
12. Interpretations ought to present the work in its best rather than its weakest light.
13. The objects of interpretation are artworks, not artists.
14. All art is in part about the world in which it emerged.
15. All art is in part about other art.
16. No single interpretation is exhaustive of the meaning of an artwork.
17. The meanings of an artwork may be different from its significance to the viewer. Interpretation is ultimately a communal endeavor, and the community is ultimately self-corrective.
18. Good interpretations invite us to see for ourselves and to continue on our own.

Barrett, Terry. (1994) *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Instructor: *Kara Wilson*

Kara Wilson is a 6th-12th grade English and Drama teacher. She has a B.A. in Literature and an M.Ed, both of which she earned from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

### [Cite this lesson](#)

Art criticism involves analyzing and evaluating every type of art that you can imagine. Find out how to apply it to the art that you want to study, whether it's photography, music, film, sculpture, dance, literature, etc.

## Definition and History of Art Criticism

When you hear the words 'art criticism', you might first imagine people standing in an art gallery frowning their brows as they point out the flaws in a painting. You might even think of this scene from the movie 'Ferris Bueller's Day Off.' But art criticism is more than just commenting on a work of art or pointing out what's wrong with it. In fact, **art criticism** is the act of analyzing and evaluating any type of art.

More specifically, art criticism:

- Involves your own interpretation
- Is done to help you understand a particular work of art by using what you know of art theory, and
- Establishes where a work fits in with the different artistic styles and movements throughout art history

Speaking of history, art criticism has been a part of many different cultures, as evaluating art has been seen as a tradition. China's tradition of art evaluation dates back to the middle of the 6th century, when writers established principles of great art and wrote biographies of great artists.

African cultures often used verbal evaluations to recognize a work of art's order, form, beauty, and how it ties to spiritual and communal activities.

Islamic cultures have a long-standing tradition of writing about art, often focusing on arts concerning the production of decorative-yet-useful objects, such as woodwork, metalwork, textiles, and calligraphy.

But today, art criticism applies to a wide range of art forms. Performing arts include: plays, dance performances, operas, live music, films and television.

Visual arts encompass: paintings, woodcuts, cartoons, stained glass, mosaics and photography.

Literature inspires our imagination by helping us think and feel differently while seeing images in our heads and includes art forms such as: fiction, a comic book script, a script of a stage play, a screenplay for a movie, poetry, and song lyrics.

Sculptural arts are similar to visual arts, but this art form is three-dimensional and can be touched or sometimes even climbed on. Some examples are: a statue, a carving, a rock garden, a water fountain, or a building.

## Assessing a Work of Art

Since this is an overview of art criticism, we're not going to go into the details of art history or theory, but I want to give you a general idea of an art critic's role, specifically how he or she assesses a work of art. Art criticism can be broken down into four steps:

1. Description
2. Analysis
3. Interpretation
4. Evaluation

If we were art critics who had to write a review of an oil painting or a sculpture, we would start by **describing what we see**. We would leave out judgments and our own interpretations of what we think it means and our analysis of it. Instead, we would describe elements such as: the size and scale of it, general shapes used, the

use of the vertical and horizontal lines and angles, color and color schemes used, the texture of it, and where and when it was done to give it historical context.

Next we would **analyze the work of art** by determining what the described elements are suggesting and why the artist used those specific colors, angles, shapes, etc. to convey feelings, ideas, or historical events. It's important to really analyze the composition of the work, focusing on details, such as its use of light, shadow, space and landscape. If a work of art is purposefully disproportionate it can make you feel a certain way, just as its use of light and/or color.

Also, think about the way it shows movement, and how you emotionally respond to it. Let's look at two great examples. On the left, we see Paul Delaroche's painting of Napoleon crossing the Alps. He created this painting in response to the one on the right, which Napoleon commissioned Jacques Louis David to create. Notice Delaroche's use of darker colors, primarily browns, and the tired mule. Meanwhile, David's painting uses diagonal lines to convey a great deal of motion, as if Napoleon is charging up the hill on his horse (though he probably did ride a mule). David uses more vibrant colors and shines a light on Napoleon, creating a sharp contrast between the light and shadows cast on him, which contrasts the almost flat mountains and sky in the distance.



*Delaroche and David: versions of Napoleon crossing the Alps*

After we have aptly described and analyzed the work of art, we must interpret it. **Interpretation** is used to establish context, explaining why we think the artist created it and what it means. When interpreting a work of art, we want to interpret the overall meaning of the work by pointing to evidence inside the work, historical context clues such as what was going on in history when it was created, and what art theories or movements relate to it.

Knowing the historical context of the painting of Napoleon crossing the Alps helps us interpret it. Napoleon commissioned Jacques Louis David to create the painting of him, which tells the viewer that this painting was part of Napoleon's propaganda. He wanted to be seen as bold, fearless, and powerful, and David's painting conveys that message. On the other hand, Paul Delaroche's work shows that Napoleon is tired from an arduous journey in which the harsh elements of the cold climate are included. Napoleon is seen in his regular human form as he presses on while riding a mule whose textured coat shows that he, too, is worn and weary. Napoleon isn't heroic in this version, but he is still clearly the leader as he is helped by a peasant on foot and followed by a soldier.

The fourth step is **evaluation**, or judgment. We must decide where an artwork stands alongside similar works and explain what aspects of it are most important when deciding its quality. Evaluation can be tricky because our own biased views often come into play here, and they shouldn't. For example, if we try to evaluate this painting of an old peasant by Van Gogh, we might already believe that old age is associated with weakness. So, when we look at the painting and try to evaluate it, that bias may cloud our judgment so that we see a frail old man even though this portrait uses vibrant and contrasting colors. So, we have to try to leave our own views out of it and really let the work speak for itself.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУКИ

# Why Walter Benjamin Is the Art World's Favorite Theorist

Rob Sharp

At the end of her 2007 biography of German philosopher Walter Benjamin, London academic Esther Leslie recounts the German artist and filmmaker Lutz Dammbeck's extrapolation of what might have happened to Benjamin had he not famously committed suicide while fleeing Europe in September 1940. Benjamin, she writes, "would have arrived in the United States after an arduous journey through the Pyrenees." Once there, he would have continued the research of his friend and intellectual Theodor W. Adorno, and, rather more unusually, participated in the controversial psychological experiments of the Harvard Psilocybin Project with Timothy Leary.

Psychedelics aside, according to Leslie (a Benjamin specialist), countless artists have been directly inspired by Benjamin's work. From

Timm Ulrichs

's successive photocopies of the philosopher's writing, in order to show its degradation through reproduction, to

Volker März

's Benjamin figurines, the theorist has inspired countless creatives since his passing. According to a 2014 *New Yorker* article by Alex Ross, the Frankfurt School—with which Benjamin was closely associated—is in the throes of a popular renaissance. "Anyone who underwent a liberal-arts education in recent decades probably encountered the thorny theorists associated with [it]," the journalist writes, citing the work of writers including Astra Taylor and Evgeny Morozov as being in the "orbit" of the Frankfurt School.



“Benjamin appeals to writers and artists who don’t think that they fit in with the art world.”

A forthcoming series of events in London will commemorate the 75th anniversary of Benjamin’s death on September 26th, 1940. The series culminates this Saturday at London’s Whitechapel Gallery with discussions and a performance exploring Benjamin’s work; other events across London, including a talk at Carroll / Fletcher, are also set to take place.

Benjamin is perhaps best known for his 1936 essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproducibility,” which explored, among other ideas, the political uses of mass-produced art. But he was also a talented journalist, radio broadcaster, literary critic, and writer of experimental narratives and stories for children. That, and the dramatic circumstances of his death—morphine pills, in a tiny village in the Pyrenees, fleeing Nazi Germany only to be held up at the French-Spanish border—contribute to his continuing presence in the popular imagination.

“This absolutely seminal body of work only increases in importance as the years go on,” says writer and curator Gareth Evans, film curator at the Whitechapel Gallery and one of those who will be discussing Benjamin’s work this week. “The question is why? For me, he is an essayist above all else, and the essay has arguably become the great literary form of our time. It’s an open form, it allows many different tones of voice to exist within it. Perhaps that explains his influence today.”

“He theorizes visuality and the art object, and that poses a huge challenge to artists about whether it’s possible to keep making art.”

“I think it’s the strong visual quality of [Benjamin’s] thought,” Leslie told me in a telephone interview. “I think he also theorizes visuality and the art object, and that poses a huge challenge to artists about whether it’s possible to keep making art. Then there is the politicization of art which has occurred since the 1960s, which in certain ways has adopted his theses.”

Another of Benjamin’s most influential pieces of writing is the unfinished *Arcades Project*, written between 1927 and 1940. The work took its title from the glass-roofed arcades of Paris, where countless shops compete for trade from strolling consumers. Adopting its structural inspiration from this form, and from that of a flâneur walking through the city, Benjamin presented a montage of quotations and reflections on hundreds of sources, grouping them under headings including “Fashion,” “Boredom,” and “Photography.”

“Benjamin appeals to writers and artists who don’t think that they fit in with the art world,” says multimedia artist Vicki Bennett, who performs under the name People Like Us, and will appear alongside cultural activist and poet Kenneth Goldsmith at the Whitechapel event. She will present the work *Citation City*, which is directly inspired by *The Arcades Project* and collages together some 300 feature films shot or set in London. “I think the way I work is more like a conceptual writer...people see the way he accumulated and assembled information, taking texts, quotes, and sometimes pictures, and collecting them in the same way we download information from the internet and put them in folders. He was doing something in an analogue form that we do now.”

“He was doing something in an analogue form that we do now.”

Leslie is working on two forthcoming translations of Benjamin's work—one of his photography criticism, and another of his short fiction—some of which has not appeared in English before. Alongside this, possible topics for her discussions on Saturday include whether Benjamin would be considered a “migrant or a refugee” in a contemporary context, making his relevance as pressing as ever.

“Recently, another [kind of] Benjamin has been brought back,” concludes Leslie. “People had always thought of him in terms of the mass reproduction of art. But with the recent publication of his radio programs in English, it has opened him up as a curious thinker. Benjamin is now coming to us as a producer, as an artist, as a maker, and that pulls him away from the hyper-academicism he got mired in during earlier times. He's now drawn into these fields of production, and I think that's because of his imaginative aspect, his valuation of the imagination.”

## Linda Nochlin's Students Remember a Teacher Who Revolutionized Art History

Alexxa Gotthardt

Linda Nochlin, a pioneering scholar who famously shepherded feminist theory into the art-historical canon, died yesterday afternoon at the age of 86. She is best known for “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?,” a searing takedown of gender inequality in the art establishment.

When the essay was first published by *ARTnews* in 1971, it promptly began to shake the deep-seated patriarchal underpinnings of the art world by asserting: “The fault lies not in our stars, our hormones, our menstrual cycles, or our empty internal spaces, but in our institutions and our education.”

Other groundbreaking writing followed. *Woman as Sex Object: Studies in Erotic Art, 1730–1970* (1973) and *Women, Art and Power* (1988), for instance, combined Nochlin’s incisive intelligence with her passion for communicating art’s cultural influence. She used humor and wit to communicate her interests, too. In 1972, she responded to an erotic French photograph of a nude woman holding a tray of apples at chest level by creating a new image. *Buy My Bananas*, as she titled the piece, replaced the lady with a nude man, and the apples with a tray of bananas held just below his penis.

She also contributed innovative research and writing to scholarship on 19th-century French artists like

Gustave Courbet

,

Pierre-Auguste Renoir

, and

Georges Seurat

, and groundbreaking essays on radical contemporary feminist artists from

Louise Bourgeois

to

Sarah Lucas

.

Beyond her wide-ranging scholarly achievements, Nochlin is also remembered for her intellectual generosity and persistent support of aspiring art historians, delivered through many years teaching at Vassar College, Yale University, and New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, where she was a professor from 1992 until her retirement in 2013. (She continued to write after she left NYU; her newest book, *Misère: The Visual Representation of Misery in the 19th Century*, will be released in March 2018.)

As word of Nochlin's death spread, the impact of her scholarship and teaching became apparent across social media through countless tributes from museum directors, arts educators, artists, scholars, and students who had studied with Nochlin, or had been inspired by her prolific body of work.

On Monday, many of her former students emphasized Nochlin's rare ability to simultaneously project openness, generosity, and intellectual rigor.

Tricia Paik, now the director of the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, recalls her first interaction with Nochlin. It was 1993, and Paik was gunning for a spot in the graduate art history program. "I remember being very nervous as the Institute was my first choice and I really wanted to study with her," Paik tells me. "I'm sure she knew I was nervous, but I recall her openness and kindness, paired with her sharp wit."

Paik secured the position as a student under Nochlin, and describes the professor's influence on her life and work as a powerful trifecta. "First of all, her scholarship, both in print and in person, was truly formative," she notes. "Secondly, her breadth of knowledge was remarkable. And lastly, just being in the presence of such a leading female role model, knowing that she was supportive of you, I believe gave me the confidence I really needed when I was just starting out."

Art historian and Artsy's Curator at Large Matthew Israel, who studied with Nochlin while pursuing his M.A. and Ph.D. in art

history at New York University, underlines Nochlin's altruistic spirit. "The words that keep coming to me as I think about Linda are generosity and attentiveness," he explains. "She was so generous with her knowledge and time and she seemed to truly listen and consider what you had to say. I was consistently amazed how she could be one of the most famous art historians in the world but also give anyone she was in conversation with both her attention and input."

Karen Chernick, a freelance art writer and regular Artsy contributor who also studied with Nochlin at NYU, agrees: "She was incredibly human and understanding, but at the same time, you had to deliver the goods," she says.

Janne Sirén, director of Albright-Knox Art Gallery, who took Nochlin's courses between 1993 to 1996 at NYU, also credits Nochlin with creating an environment that was simultaneously supportive and intellectually stimulating. He remembers Nochlin recounting that when, during one seminar, a student was too nervous to present her own work, Nochlin read the essay in her stead. "That's a memory that brings [Linda] back to me, because it was very much like her: fierce, driven, a fighter, a visionary, a torchbearer, but also always there to help those who weren't feeling like it was their moment to be on stage," he explains. "She always found a way to be supportive."

But Nochlin also pushed her students to challenge themselves. "At the same time, she was a demanding teacher. Once, I complained to her that I couldn't read a French text, and she responded by saying, 'Well, you need to learn French!'" Sirén explains with a laugh. "So I went to France to study French for a summer."

Sirén also credits Nochlin with his early interest in education. Before becoming a museum director, he taught art history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. "She really influenced me from the vantage point of being a great teacher. She ignited my passion for that field."

Adam Rizzo, now Philadelphia Museum of Art's museum educator, took classes with Nochlin from 2008 until her retirement in 2013. She also inspired him to enter education: "Linda taught me a great deal about art history, but what I took away from my classroom experiences with her was how to be a good teacher, listener, facilitator, and mentor, which is something that I bring with me to my job every day as a museum educator," he says.

Nochlin's power as an educator was enhanced by her own healthy sense of humor. "I remember walking past a particular painting of a reclining nude at the Met with Linda, which prompted her to call the artist a 'complete boob,'" Rizzo recalls. "I also remember assigning 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' to my undergrads at NYU. I only labeled the article as written by L. Nochlin—no first name—and many of them assumed that the writer of the article was a man. That gave Linda a mighty chuckle."

Nochlin's academic playfulness occasionally veered into daring territory. Another former student, Jongwoo Jeremy Kim, now an associate professor of Art History at the University of Louisville, remembers a powwow with Nochlin at the Institute of Fine Arts' Marble Room. "We Googled 'David Beckham nudes' when she was writing about Sam Taylor-Johnson's *David* (2004), a video portrait of the footballer; we completely scandalized everyone with our all-too-visible laptop screen filled with delectable male flesh," he explains. "The lesson? Serious scholarship doesn't need to be boring."

Indeed, Nochlin not only challenged her students to take risks and broaden their perspective—her scholarship challenged the entire field of art history to become more inclusive. "She was such an important figure for representing the unrepresented in art history," Chernick notes.

"I would say that having Linda as a teacher has influenced me over the years to continue to question who is visible in the art world, and to challenge why that is," Rizzo adds. "Art institutions

have a choice in deciding what stories and *whose* stories they tell, and Linda's voice is always with me in trying to affect positive change in that regard."

"She was brilliant, of course," explains art writer and former Nochlin student Aruna D'Souza of the trailblazing historian's far-reaching impact. "But she was also kind and empathetic, she was funny and sharp, and most of all she treated everyone as if they had the potential to change the way she, and the field, thought about art. How empowering that was, and how refreshing, too, her determination not to reproduce herself—to support work that challenged her own views, that took unusual paths and awoke new curiosities."

## Popular Criticism that Matters

*Journalists' perspectives of "quality" media critique*

[David Cheruiyot](#) 

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### Abstract

Popular criticism of legacy news media is argued to have the capacity to influence journalistic practice and subsequently keep journalists accountable. Scholars give prescriptions of the kinds of criticisms journalists need, if they are to be kept accountable to journalistic norms and values, but this has not been matched with perspectives of journalists. Following in-depth interviews with 24 practising journalists in Kenya and South Africa, the study found that although journalists treat fairness, facts and positiveness as "good" attributes of media critique, they are more inclined towards criticisms that show an understanding of news processes.

### Introduction

Despite the pressure from media critics, legacy news media is today touted as the last bastion of truth and hence a greater need for journalistic accountability in a post-factual age. Similarly, existing studies consider media criticism of traditional journalism as a strong mechanism of journalistic accountability, particularly critiques on social media



today (Fengler et al. [2014](#)). Critics raise legitimate journalistic issues (Cooper [2006](#)) and their criticisms potentially have the effect of holding news professionals in check when it comes to fidelity to journalistic norms and values (Joseph [2011](#); Marzolf [1991](#); Pole, Gulyás, and Rehkopf [2012](#); Powell and Jempson [2014](#)).

The transformative value of media criticism is derived from “quality” media critique—criticisms that evaluate journalistic practice and performance in a rational, informed and civil manner (Carey [1974](#); Lemert [1989](#)). It is argued that to criticize journalism would imply knowledge of the practice as the media has to be understood in terms of its “own conventions, philosophies, professional codes, traditions, ethics and aesthetics” (Wyatt [2007](#), 194; Marzolf [1991](#)).

Among the criticisms journalists receive—ranging from the corrective to the offensive—scholars offer varying criteria for “quality” or “good” criticism which includes, constructiveness, substantiable facts or “unemotional language” (Brown [1974](#); Carey [1974](#)). Most descriptions of good criticism are based on abstractions or analyses of media-critical content (see Brown [1974](#); Cooper [2006](#); Lemert [1989](#)). Existing studies have however not addressed journalists’ perceptions of media critique, yet the views of news professionals could provide important insights into the viability of media criticism as an instrument of journalistic accountability.

Through qualitative interviews with 24 mainstream media journalists in Kenya and South Africa, this article interrogates their perceptions of the nature of criticisms they read on social media. Responses suggest that largely journalists are more amenable to analytical criticism that shows understanding of journalism practice. They however question the legitimacy of most media critiques of news journalism mostly owing to uncivil language and distrust of critics’ intentions.

This study contributes to the literature on media criticism and journalistic accountability by expanding the understanding of good/quality criticism of traditional journalism practice.

## Literature Review

### Media Criticism as Metajournalistic Discourse

Existing studies make a case for incorporating non-journalistic actors in criticism as a way of expanding the critical arena of journalism practice (Carey [1974](#); Carlson [2015](#); Powell and Jempson [2014](#)). Criticism is thought to constitute an important component in metajournalistic discourse that either legitimizes or delegitimizes journalistic practice (Carlson [2015](#), [2017](#)). Critics call out unethical behaviour of journalists or “pollutant mistakes” in media content (Silverman [2007](#)), but also “act as a conscience, nagging the press to live up to higher standards, ideals, moral behaviour” (Marzolf [1991](#), 5).

Media criticism has therefore been understood as the “ongoing exchange of debate among members of the press and between the press and its audience over the role and performance of the press in a democratic society” (Wyatt [2007](#), 7). The basis for any media criticism is that it not only addresses journalists and media organizations but their

audiences as well. As a “professional critic operating on behalf of the community” the media is not above criticisms itself and is expected to cultivate a culture of criticism (Carey [1974](#), 231–232). If the media is left uncriticized there is the risk that it could become complacent, inhibiting its watchdog role, hence attracting state regulation that is a threat to press freedom (Carey [1974](#)).

In Wyatt’s ([2007](#)) discursive framework, the media acknowledges its role as not only the principal critic of society, but as “platform for the exchange of criticisms” about the society and itself. But then again, the discursive approach to media criticism is a casualty of the contention over quality and types of media critique. On the one hand, new media scholars advocate for the legitimacy of all kinds of criticisms of legacy media regardless of the motives the critics. On the other hand, some scholars have argued for quality media critique that tackles the deficiencies of journalism practice if media criticism is to be effective in transforming the conduct of news professional and performance of legacy news media (Brown [1974](#); Carey [1974](#)).

Today, media criticisms on platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are unaccounted for in existing studies yet they represent new genres of media critique that are not only instantaneous but are pervasive. There are a few studies so far that propose that the criticisms on social media raise important issues regarding the practice and their “effects are already visible” in traditional journalism (Powell and Jempson [2014](#), 126). These assertions have not been backed by empirical evidence.

In sum, there are three questions in the study of media criticism that are relevant today: its implication to journalism practice, journalistic authority, and participatory democracy (Carlson [2017](#); Cooper [2006](#)); its viability as an instrument of journalistic accountability (Fengler et al. [2014](#)), and; its effectiveness and quality of media critique (Brown [1974](#); Carey [1974](#)), a question becoming increasingly relevant with the rise of critics on social media platforms.

## Quality Criticism

Journalists of legacy media organizations receive wide-ranging media critique online some of which is argued to be transformative (Joseph [2011](#); Powell and Jempson [2014](#)). There are however other kinds of criticisms that are offensive and do not address journalistic issues. In its analysis of online comments from its audiences, the *UK Guardian*, for example, describes the range of abusive comments targeted at journalists. They include taunts such as, “You are so unintelligent”, “Call yourself a journalist?” or “Do you get paid for writing this?” as well as racist, sexist or homophobic epithets (Gardiner et al. [2016](#)). The tag “fake news” in the Trump era has been used on social media to critique the mainstream media over perceived or imagined failures (see Lee and Quealy [2017](#)).

On the basis of freedom of speech, all kinds of criticism are acknowledged as important in a democratic tradition (Hayes [2008](#); Silverman [2007](#)). However, far fewer kinds are accepted as relevant and appropriate for journalistic practice and performance. The offensive criticisms are considered counterproductive to journalistic accountability as they attract journalists’ contempt (Carey [1974](#)). They further could have a chilling effect on journalists’ exercise of press freedom or could be “obstructive” (Weissman [1962](#)) to

media's watchdog role. Most criteria of criticism, however, are based on abstractions and prescriptions based on analyses of critical content.

## Attributes of "Good" Criticism

In the process of truth production, journalism is guided by a "language of description and observation" (Carey [1974](#), 229) against the background of accepted norms and values. According to Carey, the subject of critics should be this "journalism language". And if it is to be heeded, and to serve to transform journalism then it should not only address the language but the "pre-established values" of the practice (Brown [1974](#)). Thus Carey ([1974](#)) concludes that "quality" media critique should contain "factual detail(s), unemotional language and articulate (journalistic) values" (231).

Criticisms from non-journalist are often rebuffed by news professionals on the pretext that the critic "doesn't know the business"—journalistic processes, past achievements and challenges (Lemert [1989](#), 20; Brown [1974](#)). Marzolf ([1991](#)) argues that critics should not only have an understanding of journalistic processes and the practices of the "best practitioners in the field" but have a "thorough knowledge" of the history of journalism (209). It is argued that, on the basis of their understanding of the media, critics should then weigh journalistic values and principles against the content of the media.

Further, critics are called upon to be constructive and offer genuine suggestions for improvement of journalistic performance and practice (Brown [1974](#), 17–20). Critics, particularly those interested in critical analysis of the journalism practice, may need to make their methods (substantiated claims) known to the public (Carey [1974](#); Lemert [1989](#)). Carey summarizes the attributes of "good" criticism as follows:

This criticism must be based upon precise observation, clear procedure, unemotional language, subject to the cooperative correction of others, and occurring in the public forum where all affected by the institution can at least observe and comment on the critical process. (235)

Wyatt ([2007](#)) argues that media criticism involves making "noncynical" evaluation of the effectiveness of the news media in abiding by the universal journalistic principles such as accuracy, impartiality or fairness (6). Therefore criticisms should be free of personal attacks or statements that could "inflare passions" (Ferree et al. [2002](#), 294). Civility then implies that emotions are tamed, criticisms are rational and realistic and not based on trivial or holier-than-thou premises.

While many kinds of criticisms are argued to be important and necessary in a democratic tradition (Hayes [2008](#)), there is tendency to favour the analytical type of criticism, which is seen as relevant and effective for journalistic accountability. However, despite the sober, articulate and constructive criticism online, there are criticisms that feature personal attacks, partisan rants or defamatory statements. Further, media critics sometimes "dream of journalistic worlds that do not and cannot exist" (Blanchard [1998](#), 373) and thus do not provide realistic and practical suggestions to journalists.

While scholars make propositions of what should constitute criticism that is useful to the practice, journalistic input has not often been taken into account. This study therefore aims to answer the following questions:

**RQ1:** What are the attributes of criticisms that journalists read on social media, and which ones do they prefer?

**RQ2:** Which kinds of criticisms do journalists perceive as useful in their daily practice?

## **Method**

In this study, in-depth interviews as a method was chosen to explore perceptions of journalists as regards criticism of the mainstream media. Since in-depth interviews are unstructured, there are more opportunities to probe and further understand the phenomenon one is interrogating (Denscombe [2010](#)). For this particular study, qualitative interviews provided detailed perspectives and experiences through which to build their understanding of nature of criticism on social media.

Twenty-four employed journalists in Kenya and South Africa—12 from each country were interviewed. Kenya and South Africa were selected because they are frequently studied as interesting cases in journalism studies in English-speaking Africa. The journalists were identified through strategic/purposeful sampling. From a pool of 38 journalists interviewed for a related project on media criticism, the 24 were selected because of their presence and activity on Twitter and Facebook. They represented seven outlets of mainstream media organizations in Kenya and South Africa that included: Times Media Group, Media 24, South Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Nation Media Group, Standard Media Group, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) and Radio Africa Group. These outlets were chosen because they have extensively used online media platforms and therefore their content is widely available to critics for analysis and comment.

The range of experience of the respondents was 3 and 24 years. Among the informants were seven female journalists. The roles they took were defined as either reporter or editor. The interviews were conducted in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Nairobi between July 2015 and April 2017. They took on average 61 minutes long each. All interviewees were anonymized as well as all published material resulting from this research.

The interviews interrogated the following issues: the nature of criticism journalists read on social media; the kinds of criticisms journalists dislike; the attributes of criticisms they consider as “good”, and; the types of criticisms they perceive as addressing key issues of journalism. Among the questions asked were the following: How would you describe criticism you read on social media? What kinds of criticisms would you say are helpful to your work as a journalist?

## **Findings**

This study derived the following types of criticisms from the themes drawn from the analysis: The offensive; The unreasonable; The unfounded; The instructive; The analytical. These are criticisms that either directly addressed journalistic issues, or were

indirect responses to content, journalists as individuals, policy or perceived ideology of media as institutions. Although the categories described how journalists perceived and reacted to the criticism, there were notable overlaps. Some criticisms would, for example, raise reasonable concerns, but would be laced with offensive comments. In establishing the prevalence of the types of criticisms based on the perceptions of the journalists, it could be noted that, The unreasonable and The unfounded were seen as mostly common, The offensive was common, The instructive less common, while The analytical was rare. Table 1 shows the types of criticisms, its attributes and the prevalence, according to the respondents.

TABLE 1 Types of criticisms according to journalists interviewed

[CSVDisplay Table](#)

## The Offensive

In this category are the foulest of criticisms and defamatory statements aimed at journalists. Most of the respondents interviewed considered these criticisms out-rightly offensive mostly because they were intended to demean and hurt feelings or reputations. As a respondent explained:

I feel like people talk about the media the same way they talk about the police. It's like, "Oh, they don't do anything to help us, so f\*\*k them!". Excuse my language, but you know what I mean. It's very dismissive. And I find that very disturbing. (Reporter, South Africa)

These criticisms were marked by uncivil language that rarely addressed any particular journalistic issues. The attributes of the criticisms received in this category included sexist, racist or ethnic epithets or other kinds of insults. The reception to these kinds of criticisms was, according to most journalists, outright dismissal and hostility to the critic. According to all the 24 journalists interviewed, these criticisms were obnoxious and common on social platforms and thus journalists had to develop "thick skin". A respondent stated:

I don't take them personally  
which was  
am not going to take that on board because that is not actual criticism of my work.  
(Reporter, South Africa)

These criticisms, according to five respondents, were meant to demoralize and "demonise journalism" (editor, Kenya). However, some respondents regarded the offensive kinds of criticisms as useful in gauging their audiences' general feeling about particular stories or coverage, and predicting future reactions to similar reports.

Twenty-one journalists interviewed considered civility of language as key if critics were to be taken seriously (while three said they welcomed all manner of criticism as "beneficial"). They cited profanities and obscenities as reason for not directly responding to complaints by, for example, publishing a clarification or an apology over an erroneous news story.

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## The Unreasonable

In this category, which was considered very common, the attributes of the criticism received were cynical remarks, teasing or mockery. Even though these criticisms would raise concerns about news gathering, accuracy or framing of a story, they were seen as unfair. The criticisms disrespected journalists as humans, and as professionals, according to the respondents. Reference to journalists as “clueless” or “stupid” or “idiot”, even though were mentioned in the context of a reasonable concern, were seen as unfair and frivolous:

What I don't think is fair is taking somebody's way of talking, taking somebody's intellect and saying so and so could have done better. There are other ways of telling a person they can grow without criticising their character. (Reporter, South Africa)

Further, under this category were criticisms that focused on negativity. According to some respondents, these kinds of criticisms came from persistent critics who “never see anything positive” and “just criticise for the sake of it” (reporter, South Africa; editor, Kenya). Most journalists did not take time to “reason” with such critics as they were seen be disinterested in any kind of explanation, thus a respondent put it, “it is a waste of time” (editor, Kenya).

## The Unfounded

These are criticism that journalists described as deserving attention, but lacking in merit. Critics either based their concerns on falsehoods or the wrong premise. They were criticism based on claims that are unsubstantiated. For example, claims that journalists received a bribe to cover a certain political party favourably.

Further in this category, there were critics who showed little understanding of “the trade” (journalism). One respondent described how critics would have little understanding of key roles in the newsroom:

To him (the critic) the blame solely fell on the person he saw on the (TV) screen. The person he saw on the screen was a novice, he was bad, everything was terrible about the person. And that is his understanding of a TV program production ... (Yet it) is production that has different roles, and the person on the screen is just supposed to say things as they are, but if the whole 30 minutes is falling apart, there is only so much you can do. (Reporter, South Africa)

There are other criticisms in this category that did not show any understanding of news processes and were considered petty and shallow. As one respondent put it:

There are also those who are not informed, some of them, especially Facebook guys, will only discuss the headline. They have not read the stories, so they don't know the context of the headline ... Some of the arguments on a headline. (Editor, Kenya)

Eleven respondents agreed that they would take note of their criticism and only two would in some cases respond to such a critic by correcting them. What was noteworthy in

most interviews with journalists was that the kind of reception to these kinds criticisms was generally positive.

## The Instructive

This is the category of criticism that journalists welcomed, even if they did not necessarily act upon. Here the criticisms were factual and based on informed opinion. Such criticisms pointed out errors or weaknesses in news coverage and provided specific prescriptions. A respondent stated:

... if you are criticizing me, I expect you to tell me, “You should have used this. This story could have been better if you used this information, took this angle or interviewed an expert in this field (other) than just writing or trying to generalize the story”. (Reporter, Kenya)

Although the respondents preferred instructive criticisms, they were less common because most critics on social media focused on the negative aspects of their work. Further, the constructive comments were considered apt appraisal of their journalism work, especially if the critic was positive and even in some cases, offered praise. As one respondent put it:

It’s funny because I think I would often learn more from constructive criticism than I would from some praise but as it is, I haven’t really received much constructive criticism apart from my girlfriend, my editor, somebody who reads my stuff from that sort of perspective rather than somebody who doesn’t know me. (Reporter, South Africa)

Five respondents preferred that these kinds of criticism be genuine, fair and not driven by ulterior motives. In this category were also accusations of bias and inaccuracies that the respondents would, in a few instances, admit but were generally ambivalent about the recommendations of the critics. Some reporters explained that some journalistic issues raised were institutional challenges that could not be addressed by an individual journalist’s change of behaviour.

## The Analytical

Here the criticisms were of two kinds: the ones that engaged journalists with their weaknesses, and; criticisms that showed an understanding of journalism practice. In this category were valid criticisms, for example, corrections of facts and grammatical errors. Here journalists found the criticism had merit, were fair and directly focused on specific journalistic issue.

All the respondents favoured these kinds of criticisms because they provided the basis to give an explanation or debate with the critic. (It is however important to note here that there was often a conflation of The instructive and The analytical criticisms, which required further probing in order to establish the respondents’ understanding. In the analytical type of criticism, critics did not aim to just offer prescriptions to journalists, but reasoned with them.) A respondent put it this way:

In expressing an opinion around journalism as it were, it would really be great if that opinion is an informed opinion. But in (situations) where it is not an informed opinion, you can engage with the person in order to assist them to understand what the facts are around something. And you can also agree to disagree. (Editor, Kenya)

Most respondents were of the view that such criticisms were rare and mostly came from their peers or former journalists. Criticisms here were rational, serious and civil. They did not necessarily point out what journalists should do, but explained the processes and pointed out weaknesses in for example reliability of the source, depth of a story or bias in coverage. A respondent summarized it as follows:

The good criticism is the one that actually talks to the content of your article, the bad one is the one that talks around your article

the news, but not focusing on what you have written. If you're going to critique me personally, look at the work that I've done, and not generalize on the issues I write, because that doesn't help me as a writer. (Editor, South Africa)

Most respondents felt fact-checking and grammatical corrections by the public were helpful as long as they were expressed in a civil and rational manner. Beyond the criticisms were critics' sincerity and openness to engage, which also mattered to journalists. Further, there was a strong suggestion by most journalists (13) that actionable criticisms were analytical in nature, tempered and well-reasoned.

Even so, generally, the respondents expressed ambivalence over critic's intentions by, for instance, claims that former journalists being analytical were not driven by genuine motives to improve journalism.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This article examined journalists' perspectives of the nature of criticisms they read on social media. The study found that journalists in Kenya and South Africa mostly received offensive, unreasonable and unfounded criticisms online, which they often rejected. Instead, journalists mostly preferred criticisms that were fair, civil, unemotional, reasoned and rational that mostly fell in two categories: The instructive and The analytical.

The findings suggest that the attributes of "good" criticisms desired by journalists mostly align with those scholars have prescribed, such as positiveness, reasoned arguments, informed opinion, substantiated facts and unemotional language (Brown [1974](#); Carey [1974](#); Lemert [1989](#)). While the study sought to diversify data collection but not take a comparative approach, some cross-national comparisons were noted. Overall, the way journalists perceived media criticism was mostly similar in both Kenya and South Africa, exemplified in their descriptions of the nature of criticism on social media. The differences were in the sources of criticism (preferred platforms and critics) and issues critics raised—dimensions that may require systematic studies in the future for comprehensive results.

Despite the varying perceptions of the nature of criticisms on social media, there was a marked ambivalence over the critiques, the critics themselves and their perceived



intentions. Journalists expected a critic to be knowledgeable of news processes and at the same time understand the pressure to get accurate, balanced and fair stories against a fast-paced news cycle, a common trait of news workers (Lemert [1989](#)).

While constructiveness was a desired attribute of the criticisms, journalists did not perceive suggestions from critics as worth acting upon. While solution-focused criticism was appreciated, majority of the journalists admitted they did not give it consideration in their work. However, the analytical kind of criticism was perceived as beneficial as journalists found the basis to engage and reason with the critics in some instances. Journalists' preference for analytical criticism suggests that the most preferable candidate for a critic would be a fellow journalist who has practical and insider knowledge of the news practice.

There are several implications to this finding. Firstly, journalists see non-journalists as perhaps illegitimate appraisers of their work. This confirms the arguments that journalists engage in boundary work, and seek to maintain their professional autonomy (Carlson and Lewis [2015](#); Vos [2011](#)). The journalists did not only claim the criticisms were unreasoned, unsubstantiated, offensive, emotional or defamatory, but they rejected them even if in some cases the criticisms raised pertinent journalistic issues. Indeed critics may raise questions about objectivity, accuracy or fairness therefore “championing traditional norms rather than challenging them” (Vos, Craft, and Ashley [2012](#)). The critics employ journalistic norms and values as “frames of references” when evaluating journalism practice but they do not necessarily aim to “transform journalism” (Cheruiyot [2017](#); Vos, Craft, and Ashley [2012](#)).

Secondly, journalistic accountability calls upon news professionals to give an account of editorial decisions, explain journalistic processes to their audiences, or offer remedies such as corrections, apologies or clarifications (Fengler et al. [2014](#)). The fact that journalists question legitimacy of the critics and their criticisms and further do not respond to them, puts to question the viability of media criticism as an accountability mechanism. Therefore, the claim that criticism from their audiences on social media has an impact on conduct and behaviour of journalists (see Joseph [2011](#); Pole, Gulyás, and Rehkopf [2012](#)) has to be interrogated further, especially in relation to criticism as a metajournalistic discourse. Relatedly, it might be useful to weigh the results against recent studies showing a stronger voice of the audience in editorial decisions mainly through social media analytics (Ferrer-Conill and Tandoc [2018](#)).

Finally, while the types of criticism identified in this study may not be exhaustive, they would hopefully serve as the basis for more systematic and quantitative studies into their prevalence. Further, future research could investigate the journalistic issues critics raise, the extent to which the criteria for quality criticisms matter to journalists as well as the underlying motivations of the critics.

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РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУКИ

# WHAT IS CRITICISM? (AN INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL JOURNALISM. ONLINE COURSE BY DR MAYA JAGGI)

THE MAIN FORMS OF CULTURAL JOURNALISM IN PRINT AND ONLINE ARE REVIEWS, INTERVIEWS, PROFILES AND GENERAL FEATURES (BROADLY DEFINED AS ANY ARTICLES THAT ARE NOT NEWS REPORTS). CULTURE IS ALSO COVERED IN NEWS REPORTS, COMMENT AND BLOGS. MOST OF THESE FORMS RELY ON CORE JOURNALISM SKILLS SUCH AS REPORTING AND INTERVIEWING. BUT THEY ALSO INCLUDE CRITICISM, WHICH MEANS THE SKILL OF CRITICAL APPRECIATION. MOST FORMS OF CULTURAL JOURNALISM CAN BE ENRICHED BY INCORPORATING AN ELEMENT OF CRITICISM. THAT MEANS MAKING YOUR OWN ASSESSMENTS OF ART, NOT JUST RELYING ON RECEIVED OPINION. SO THIS IS A FIELD OF JOURNALISM IN WHICH YOU CAN FIND AND EXPRESS A PERSONAL VOICE.

What is criticism? We are all critics in the sense that we constantly judge whether cultural products (such as books, films or TV programmes) are good or not, and how they compare with others of their type. But criticism is not just an opinion. A review is an argument based on evidence which seeks to persuade others. It ideally includes an element of objective description of whatever is being reviewed. While reviews, like comment, are subjective, the critic aspires to speak not just for him or herself, but for other readers, listeners or viewers.

Critics play a vital role in supporting cultural and creative industries, and in enabling artists of all kinds to develop their art and reach audiences. But criticism is neither promotion nor just consumer advice. It may be a good thing if people read a book or see a film or show because of a review. But a critic must be independent of marketing. Their job is not to sell anything in particular, but to pay attention to art, whether it has financial backing or not. They can in fact function as an antidote to hype, or expensive promotion. Among the critic's obligations are to be fair to the artist he or she is reviewing, and to the art form itself. But their main responsibilities are arguably to the audience, and to give their judgement with integrity.

The language of the review will depend on the audience for which it is intended. With some conceptual art, for example, one function of the critic may be to translate theoretical jargon into terms the general reader will understand. Critics can mediate between art and audiences, explain the new, and even predict what will last. They can set standards and shape tastes, sometimes working against public opinion.

Criticism can be read for cultural news, as a forum for debate and as a mirror of social concerns. The audience for book reviews, for example, might include people who will read the book being reviewed; people who have already read it; and people who will never read it. A review should include factual information (for example, release details and dates, or venues); description; some flavour or quotation of the work; context; and evaluation or judgement. Relevant context might include the artist's past work; comparable works by other artists; and the entire history of the genre or art form. It might include an element of the artist's biography, though not usually their domestic circumstances or the market value of the art works. Unlike academic reviewers, a reviewer in the news media is expected to make a judgement.

Here are some questions you could ask yourself as a reviewer: Is the artist doing something new, or taking their art form in a different direction? If they are working in a tradition, in what way do they conform or depart from it, or develop it? How does the work compare with others by the same artist or other artists? What art has inspired or influenced them?

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ БГУИМ

# What are the main forms of cultural journalism?

*The main forms of cultural journalism in print and online are:*

- Reviews
- Profiles
- Comment
- General features
- Interviews
- News reports
- Blogs
- (articles that are not news reports)*

**Core journalism skills:** Reporting; Interviewing; Criticism.

**CRITICISM is neither promotion nor just consumer advice.**  
**The main responsibilities of critics are arguably to the audience, and to give their judgement with integrity.**

**Here are some questions you could ask yourself as a reviewer:**

- **Is the artist doing something new**, or taking their art form in a different direction?
- **If they are working in a tradition**, in what way do they conform or depart from it, or develop it?
- **How does the work compare with others** by the same artist or other artists? What art has inspired them?

**Interviewing:**

- **Interviews can take many forms**, including feature-articles, Q&A or transcripts, profiles and online audio podcasts.
- **To prepare to interview a cultural figure**, the most important task is to **familiarise yourself with as much of their work as possible**, as well as the biographical details of their life.
- **You can give them a chance to respond** to criticisms that have been made of their work.
- **An interview should be carefully structured** – the most important questions asked early on – but you should be ready to listen carefully and change the structure depending on how the conversation develops.
- **Be sure to include 'colour'**, meaning the atmosphere and description of the person or location where you met them, and of the art itself, as well as plenty of quotation.



Online course by Dr Maya Jaggi

